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V. Individualistic and Collectivistic Bents and Traditions

The nomadic society of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Mongols shows collectivistic trends insofar as the pastures are always owned collectively and the livestock can be taken care of and protected only cooperatively. In periods of war and uprisings, the livestock had to be protected militarily, which was one reason why the military organization of the nomads, introduced by Chingis Khan, survived up to the twentieth century. Here we can say that the nomadic Kirghiz and Kazakh still shows a tremendous martial spirit, especially the Kazakhs who fought the Communists in 1949 and 1950 in a heroic way in spite of the fact that they were outnumbered from the very beginning.

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As a matter of fact, the Mongols show much less martial spirit than neighboring Kirghiz, Kazakh and especially Tibetans, who constantly rise up here and there, becoming a major nuisance for Peking, although they are hopelessly outnumbered by Chinese Communist Troops. Many explorers agree independently that the Mongols, once intrepid, dauntless, unafraid, frightful and terrifying warriors, make now the impression of being inefficient soldiers, timid, downhearted, and discouraged (so Rockhill, Howorth, Tafel, Vladimirtsov, Hedin, Futterer, and Filchner). Russian scholars, above all B. Vladimirtsov in his Le Regime Social Des Mongols, Le feodalisme Nomade, Paris 1948, blame Buddhism for the disappearance of the martial spirit and courage of the Mongols. This opinion is, however, contradicted by the fact that Tibetans, who have been influenced by Buddhism some centuries longer than the Mongols, are well-known as tough and cunning fighters and apparently fearless and daring insurgents.

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Almost every Tibetan family has at least one son in a monastery. They faithfully pay their tributes to these monasteries where their sons live as novices or monks. The monasteries are the only cultural centers of the nomads. Kumbum might be named as a magnificent example in regard to external architectural beauty as well as internal wealth in respect to its library, printing house, and the spiritual value of its schools and its Lamaistic academies.

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There are many reasons to believe that the Communist regime is determined to abolish nomadism and to make the nomads sedentary or at least semi-sedentary. The first step was the erection of permanent winter sites. The attitude of the nomads toward the regime seems to be ambivalent. The erection of veterinary stations for the livestock and the extension of additional irrigated pastures certainly are measures approved by the nomads but on the other hand the threatening

S N 635 186 between the Moslems and the Lamaists.

As a result of the aforesaid complexity of its geographic basis as well as its intricate historical and political background, the Northwest's population problems are as complicated as its intermingling ethnic composition. S 635 648 For many years, the extreme northwestern province of Sinkiang suffered from continual conflict between China and Russia, although with the introduction of the Communist regime, the conflict seems at least temporarily resolved.

N 47 361 178 The development of industrialization in present day China is concentrated in the Northwest. New towns have been emerging in barren mountains and in deserts, such as Shih-yu-ho (near Yü-men), Tu-shan-tzu, (south of Wu-su) and Shih-ho-tzu on the western highway of Urumchi between the towns of Manas (Sui-lai) and Ulan-Wusu. The first two sprang up because of the drilling of promising oil wells in the Chi-lien and Tien-shan mountains.

N 647 816 The China Academy of Sciences announced in December, 1955, that in 1956 a number of new research divisions will be established in the Northwest: a Petroleum Research Bureau in Lanchow of Kansu, an Agro-biology Bureau in Wu-kung, Shensi, an Archaeological Research Bureau in Sian, a Geo-physical Research Bureau and a Veterinary Research Bureau. (Jen-min jih-pao Dec. 16, 1955, NCNA. May 11, 1956).

N 816 185 435 [648] Last November, the Northwest Branch of the China Academy of Sciences held a meeting at which, with the assistance of the Russian Korshekov an ambitious plan was formulated for the economic development of the Northwest in the coming fifteen years, with emphasis on survey of natural resources, study of petroleum and rare metals, exploitation of non-ferrous metals, agronomy, soil science and animal husbandry. N [873] In these discussions, the professors of three schools of higher education, the Northwest University, the Northwest Industrial College, and the Northwest Agricultural College, took an active part. (Kuang-ming jih-pao Dec. 13, 1955; NCNA. May 11, 1956).

N 161 B. General Distribution and Regional Characteristics.

The Northwest Region has an average density of 28.6 persons per square mile, as compared with the average density of 160 per square miles for the whole country. It has the smallest number in population among all the major regions of China, as the following shows:

Major Regions	Population (1953 Census)
North China	55,749,000
Northeast China	41,732,000
East China	162,682,000
Central and South China	176,331,000

161 Beyond the Alashan, Nan-shan, and Ta-chi-shih mountains in
133 most parts of Chinghai, western Kansu including most parts
of former Ninghsia covering the Alashan and Khara Gobi
deserts and all Sinkiang, where the annual rainfall is generally
below five inches except in the higher elevations, the small
population is intensely concentrated in a number of small
isolated oases scattered along the base of the snow-capped
high ranges. Numerous snow-fed mountain streams come down
the Nan-shan, the Kunlun, the Tien-shan and the Altai.
[312] Before they disappear in the nearby deserts, they provide a
reliable source of water for irrigation. Hence a string of
487 oases are scattered between deserts and mountains. The so-
312 called Kansu corridor along the Nan-shan, the Silk Road
along the Kunlun, the Tien-shan nan-lu (Southern Road)
• 361 and the Tien-shan pei-lu (Northern Road) along the south and
161 north foothills of the Tien-shan (Celestial Mountain) Range
are all developed along these oases which provide the only
available natural stations along all the trade routes through
Northwest China and Central Asia. These oases are the sole
centers of human settlement for agriculture, horticulture,
animal husbandry, and pastoralism. Since they are so intensively
487 cultivated and populated, in most cases they form administrative
361 hsien or county seats, i.e. from southeast to northwest along
634 the Kansu corridor, Ku-lang, Wu-wei, Yung-chang, Shan-
161 tan, Chang-yeh, Lin-tse, Kao-tai, Chiu-chuan, Yü-men,
An-hsi, Tun-huang, etc. Along the Silk Road at the foot of
the Kunlun Mountains east-westward are No-chiang, Chieh-mo,
Keriya (Yu-tien), Tse-leh, Lo-pu, Ho-tien, Mo-yü, Pi-shan,
Yeh-chang, Sha-che, Ko-ko, Yingihissar (Ying-chi-sha),
Shu-le, etc. Along the Tien-shan
nan-lu, east-westward are Qumol (Hami), Shan-shan, Turfan,
Ho-sho, Yen-chi, Korla, Lun-tai, Ku-che, Pai-chang, Wen-
su, Aksu, Ke-ping, Pa-chu, Ka-shih, Shu-fu, etc. Along the
Tien-shan pei-lu, east-westward are Barkul (Chenhsi), Chitai,
Urumchi, Chang-chi, Ching-hua, Sui-lai, Wu-su, and Ching-ho
to Sui-ting in the Ili valley. Thus the distribution of population
occurs in clusters or isolated pockets of densely peopled
areas, dotted along the foot of the high mountains, but separated
by desert wastes.

361 In the enclosed upland Tsaidam and Koko Nor Basins of
233 Chinghai province, a small number of nomads exist mainly in
the part which is oriented toward and exposed to the limited
311 moist wind, where the grassland is suitable for limited grazing.
The location varies from basin to basin. In the Tsaidam, the
pasture is found in the southeastern part, while in the northwestern
part lies the Koko Beile Desert. In the case of the Koko Nor Basin,
the climatic orientation is reversed. Similar conditions prevail

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361 also in Dzungaria. There a large expanse of pasture land
233 prevails more in the south along the northern foothill slope
311 of the Tien-shan than the north along the southern side of
the Altai.

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161 C. Population Trend and Its Significance
1. The Changing Trend of the Northwest in Comparison with Other Major Regions.

The population of the Northwest as in the rest of the country has been on the increase in spite of the limited arable and irrigable land resulting from inadequate rainfall, and the mountainous terrain, as well as the frequent earthquakes in
N Kansu and repeated Moslem disturbances. It was reported that
[731] more than 246,000 people were killed by the great earthquake
[165] of Hai-yüan, Ching-ning, and Tung-wei in eastern Kansu in
[669] December, 1920, and the Moslem uprisings of 1861-1874,
1895, and 1944. Long before the 1953 census was taken, there has been an incessant influx of people in large numbers. A gradual increase is marked by various estimates and reports.
S For example, in regard to the population estimation of
[161] Sinkiang Province, the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1910 gave the figure of 2,670,000 and 2,519,579 in 1923; the record taken from "Le Temps" of April 5, 1934, is around 5,000,000. According to a nation-wide regional survey taken by the Agricultural College of Nanking University in the period from 1928-1933, the annual rate of natural increase of the Northwest was at 11.5 per thousand which was exceeded only by the North China Plain, as illustrated by Table XII.[1]

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163 According to the 1953 census report for the nation as a
165 whole, the average birth rate is thirty-seven per thousand, average death rate, seventeen, and average annual natural increase, twenty.

Table XII clearly indicates that the annual natural increase rate of the Northwest is due to a smaller death rate rather than a higher birth rate as compared with other regions. This might be the result of a healthier, drier climate rather than better living conditions or medical care. The 1953 census report gives an even larger natural increase for the nation due to a higher birth rate and a lower death rate. The gradual
N population increase of the Northwestern provinces is also
161 shown by Table XIII.[2] this table shows a considerable increase for the provinces of Shensi and Kansu (including Ninghsia)
S especially. As for Chinghai and Sinkiang, although the increase
[161] is not so pronounced, nearly one third of a million for the former and 1.1 million increase for the latter are indicated. These bring a total increase of over thirteen million (more than half the original number in seven years) for the four

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[1,2.] [See pp. 135-136--Analyst.]

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7	Chinese	210	scattered all over Sinkiang, the bulk being in the triangle of Charchlike, Hami and Kuldja
8	Dungans	100	the same as No. 7
9	Olots	15	on the Tekes River and Kashr.
10	Torguts	18	in the Tien-Shan between Kuldja and Karashar, on the tributaries of the Black Irtysh
11	Khoshuts	21	in the Altai in the area of Chuguchak and along the Yuldus River
12	Chakhar	8	in the Borokhoro mountains
13	Urianghai	4	in the Altai, in the area of Chuguchak
14	Russians	15 - 16	live in the cities only, mainly in Kashgar, Yarkend, Urumchi, Chuguchak, Kuldja, Guma, Knotan, Keriya and Qumul
15	Tajiks	9	the main bulk lives at the Sinkiang-Afghanistan border, especially in the towns of Ktash Qurghan and Yanighissar

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B. The Ethnic Groups of Kansu

The main racial group in the province of Kansu is the Chinese who number more than twelve million. Other ethnic groups are the Mongours (Mongols), the Turks (Salars and Sarigh-Uighurs), and finally the Tibetans.

Number	Group	Number of people in thousands	Areas in which they live
1	Chinese	10,500	everywhere within the province

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No.	Group	No. of People(in thousands)	Areas in which they live
2	Chinese Mohammedans	1,500	Mostly in the northern and western part of the province
3	Mongours	30	In the area which is enclosed by the Pingfan River, Tatung River, Hsining River and the Yellow River westward of Lanchou
4	Tibetans	40	scattered over the area which is enclosed by the Ping-fan River, Tatung River, Hsining River and the Yellow River
5	Sarigh-Uighur	5	on the northern slopes of the Nanshan, south of Suchou
6	Mongols (Torguts and Ölöts)	?	The Torguts live in the area west and east of the Edsin gol and north of the line Ansi Sü-chou. The Ölots live in the Alashan, north of Kan-chou and Liang-chou and the Chukhushan mountains, also north of the Lung-shan.

C. The Ethnic Groups of Chinghai

The main racial groups in the province of Chinghai are the Chinese, the Tibetans, the Chinese Moslems, the Salar Turks, the Mongols (Ölöts from Alashan) and the Mongours or Tu-jen.

No.	Group	No. of People (in thousands)	Areas in which they live
1	Chinese	576	Mainly in the southeastern part of Chinghai, also along the Nan-shan mountain region, bordering Kansu and Sinkiang
2	Tibetans	417	In the Kuku-nor area, in the Dang-la mountain range and at the headwaters of the Yellow River

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No.	Group	No. of People (in thousands)	Areas in which they live
3	Chinese Moslems	138	In the capital Hsining (19,000) in the districts of Ta-tung, Huang-chung, Huang-yuan, Min-huo, Hua-lung, Hsun-hua, Meng-yuan, Also in the cities of Ho-chow and Lin-hsia.
4	Salars (Turks)	50	In the area of Hsun-hua, south of the Yellow River, and around Payen-Jung, southeast of Hsining.
5	Mongols	33	In the area north of the Kuku-nor, south and north of the Tsaidam swamps and in the area of the Bayan Kara Shan mountain range.
6	Mongours	72	West of the Kuku-nor in the area of the tributaries of the Ta-tung River, Hsining River. Some of them live south of the Yellow River around Kuei-te.

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*563 have very scanty beards,and there is seldom any growth of hair
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142 on the body.

e. economic activities

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*563 The Mongours gave up their nomadic way of life and became farmers. They cultivate barley, wheat, peas, rapeseed, colza,
M hemp and potatoes. The second important economic resource is
[241] livestock, consisting of horses, cows, mules, pigs and sheep.
[233] The Mongours are also good hunters and fishermen. The Mongours
[433] now live in brick and mud houses resembling their former tent (yurt).

M
Until recently the Mongours wore their national costumes.
[291] However, when the Communists took over they ordered them to
[177] wear only Chinese clothing.
[771] By religion, the Mongours are Lamaist-Buddhists.

2. Other groups

Besides the Mongours, there are Ölöts and Torguts living in Kansu. They are similar in all respects to the Olots and Torguts of Sinkiang.

C. The Mongols of Chinghai

1. General characteristics

Due to the new partition of the province, some of the Mongours
N now belong to Chinghai Province. Very little is known about the
[177] Eastern Mongols living around the Tsaidam and Kokohor areas. However, all explorers' reports say that they have become more and more Tibetanized and are forgetting their own Mongolian
N
[233] language. They are still pastoral nomads like the Ölots and the Torguts of Sinkiang.

N
2. Hordes

*563 When Tafel (between 1905 and 1908) travelled in the Chinghai
619 area he found the following groups of Mongols:

• 361 (1) Wang-ka or the horde of the Chinghai Wang, consisting of 150-350 families, of which one group nomadized on the Dulan-gol,
*[175] west of the Kokonor, and the other group lived around the monasteries of Gomba-soma and Minia-ta;

(2) the horde of the Muri Wang, about 50 families, which nomadized on the upper course of the Ta-tung River;

(3) the horde of the Kukut Bei-le, about 200 families, which nomadized around the Serkhe-nor, northeast of the Tsaidam swamps;

(4) the horde of the Kurluk Bei-tse, about 800 families which nomadized around the Bagha Tsaidam area;

(5) the horde of the Merkhe Bei-tse westwards of 4; there is no information about population figures.

(6) the horde of Shui-hia Bei-tse in the valley above Bamba; there is no further information about population figures.

(7) the horde of the Gobi Gung, which nomadized in the area of Tankar;

/Chinghai Mongols/

*563 619 • 361 (8) the horde of the Tsinkuk (Tsunkuk) Gung near the monastery of Gomba-soma and in the Tsunkuk valley (no population figure given).

(9) the horde of the Dunkur Gung, consisting of a few families nomadizing in the area of Dunkur Monastery south of Tankar;

(10) the horde of the Chabcha Gung, 30 families, nomadizing east of Gungga-nor;

(11) the horde of the Taijinar Dzasak, about 1000 families, nomadizing at the southern edge of the Tsaidam swamps;

(12) the horde of the Dzun Dzasak, about 500 families, also nomadizing at the southeastern edge of the Tsaidam swamps;

(13) the horde of the Barun Dzasak, about 250 families, nomadizing southeast of the Dzun;

(14) the horde of the Harchiu (Kara Chut) Dzasak, about 40 families nomadizing north of the Dabasun-nor;

(15) the horde of the Morchi Dzasak, which is composed of a few families, nomadizing in the valley of Lala, southwest of Dankar;

(16) the horde of Torgho Dzasak, 120 families, nomadizing around Shara-khoto;

(17) the horde of the Gomi Dzasak, 30 families, northwestward of Kue-te;

(18) the horde of the Ta-tung Dzasak around Ta-tung-ch'eng (no population figure given)

(19) the horde of the Dia-shir Dzasak, westward of the Kurluk Bei-tse.

*563 631 P. K. Kozlov presents in his Mongolia i Kam, (Petersburg, 1906) another subdivision of the Chinghai Mongols. He subdivides the 24 banners into two brigades:

a) Dzun edeget (left brigade)
   1) Tsing-hai Wang, 130 families (Tafel: Wang-ka)
   2) Kököd Beili, 200 families (Tafel: Kukut bei-le)
   3) Kurlik Bei-si, 800 families (Tafel: Kurluk Bei-tse)
   4) Bukhain Gun, 4 families (Tafel: ?)
   5) Arokholin Gun, 25 families (Tafel: Dunkur Gung)
   6) Sham Gun, 15 families (Tafel: presumably Gobi Gung)
   7) Torgut Dzasak, 30 families (Tafel: presumably Torgho Dzasak)
   8) Tsulgen Dzasak, 30 families (Tafel: ?)
   9) Chonon Dzasak, 30 families (Tafel: ?)
   10) Harakchut Dzasak, 30 families (Tafel: Kharachut Dzasak)
   11) Kurlik Dzasak, 24 families (Tafel: ?)
   12) Taijinar Dzasak, 600 families (Tafel: taijinar)
b) Barun edeget (right brigade)
   1) Muru Wang, 80 families (Tafel: Muri Wang)
   2) Erkhe Bei-le, 60 families (Tafel: ?)
   3) Chun Bei-si, 10 families (Tafel: presumably Shui-hia Bei-tse)
   4) Hargi Bei-si, 150 families, (Tafel: ?)
   5) Dondogo Gun, 10 families (Tafel: presumably Chabcha Gung)

/The Nomadic Tibetans/

In those cases where a man has more than one wife, each
*563 wife must have her own tent which will be within the area of the
595 encampment assigned to the husband. Within the tent the wife
593 frequently has full authority. It is she who welcomes and looks
574 after the guests and to whom farewells must be formally made.

As is the case with most of Tibet, the problem of polyandrous
*563 unions remains unclear. One authoritative source assigns such
595 unions to the nomads, and another will insist that it is a phenom-
114 enon of the sedentary Tibetans. Each produces logical explanations for its appearance in the one and not in the other. Moreover, the Tibetans themselves will state arbitrarily that it is commoner in one group or the other, but again there is no unanimity of opinion. Out of all the conflicting accounts, it can be deduced that polyandry exists, probably, in both nomadic and sedentary Tibetan populations and that peculiar local situations account for its prevalence in one or the other area. However, it is doubtful that it is uniformly practiced by any section of the population. Side by side with polyandrous families, moreover, polygynous unions are also found. Most common, is a more or less brittle monogamy.

*563 Since the people of the black tents practice transhumance,
233 their nomadic activities are measured in terms of elevation,
221 rather than actual distance covered. From late spring through
fall the encampments as units climb to successively higher pastures and then descend again. Winter finds them at their lowest elevation and the group is no longer a tent-circle. Instead of the
[342] regular circular arrangement of the yak-hair tents, the winter
• [361] settlement may consist of sod-covered huts, which may be of
wattle and daub construction, rammed earth, tent-roofed sod walls or similar materials. There is no regular arrangement of the huts, because the factors which led to the arrangement of the campsites are not operative.

The different activities around the year help dictate the limits of communal action. The short growing seasons of the successive pastures, necessitate frequent shifts. Thus eight or nine movements between winters are not uncommon. The tasks of striking camp, keeping the herds along the route and reestablishing the circles involve maximum cooperation from all involved. None can travel with impunity ahead or behind the others. The encampments represent military units because raids and stealing herds are recognized as rungs on the ladder to success.

*563 In winter, the activities are more diversified. Gone is the
221 constant vigilance against human and animal foes. Gone too, is
the necessity of frequent, simultaneous uprooting and reestablishment. Life is conducted at a more leisurely and individual
*563 pace. Many of the nomads form trading caravans, which will
221 journey beyond the settlements of the Tibetan farmers to trade
437 their wool, hides, and other products among the Chinese Moslems. These caravans may be composed of some of the men of a single

S
/The New Uighurs/

563 individual and the community. Natural resources to not seem
178 to be of prime importance in Sinkiang. However, their exploita-
[31] tion through free or forced labor will further break down Uighur
S kinship ties and thereby alter the social structure. In recent
[464] times large numbers of non-Uighur laborers have been intro-
duced into the area, further augmenting alien cultural elements.

S
563 Uighurs participating in small-scale home industries and
438 handicrafts are organized under the leadership of a Chong-usta.
622 Unlike the merchant's "guild" aqsaqal, he is not a public official.

S Under the Manchu system the Büks (communal leaders) were
563 classed in five degrees of rank, ranging from the third to the
554 seventh degree of the Chinese official scale. 1. Ak'im Bük-
[631] local governor; 2. Ishkhan Bük -Assistant Governor; 3. Shang
[647] Bük - Collector of Revenue; 4. Katsanatch'i Bük - same as
[692] above; 5. 'Hatze Bük - Judge; 6. Mirabu Bük - Superintendent
of Agriculture.

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As discussed previously, the Mirabu Bük was also the offi-
[312] cial having authority over water rights and water distribution.
In practice the Manchu Amban, highest Manchu official in a given
area, chose the Ak'im Bük who, in turn, chose his own subordi-
nates.

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563 Farm units were organized as follows: Ten such units were
241 lead by an On-bashi, fifty by an Illik-bashi, one hundred by an
554 Yüz-bashi. The duties of the Büks and Yüz-bashis mainly con-
sisted of keeping and collecting registers and taxes. This gov-
ernmental organization was abolished officially by the Chinese
Revolution in 1911. However, traces of this structure are
still found today.

S
563 The whole Uighur social structure certainly will undergo
668 far-reaching changes under the Communist government. How-
ever, at this time only hypotheses about these changes can be
177 advanced. As new cultural and political structures are imposed
on the society, kinship ties will be further loosened. The Uighur
communisty and its structure will take on new characteristics,
as old institutions disappear and new ones are introduced.
Except, perhaps, for the nuclear family, social groupings
will be brought more and more into accordance with the new
ideals of the society.

N
B. The Sedentary Tibetans

*563 Much that has been said about the nomadic Tibetans holds
equally true for their sedentary counterparts. Again the basic
[592] unit is the group of families living together. In the sedentary
• [361] community, the village may be composed of from a dozen to
seventy, eighty or even more houses arranged adjacent to
N each other. The roofs of the normally two-storied buildings
[342] are close enough to form a pathway, and are used as such.

000 kitchens."

N *563 M 601 59 . For all members of the same generation, the Monguors use the same term differentiating according to sex. The extended family provides a framework of social support for the nuclear family, the latter consisting of a father, mother and their children. Adoption of sons by childless couples is practiced.

N *563 M 565 582 614 Exogamy is the first rule of marriage and isstrictly observed among the nobles. There are no marriages between nobles and commoners in the clan, since all individuals bear the same clan name. However, there are exceptions to this rule, especially when the clan structure breaks down. The status of the wife is inferior to that of the husband. Relationship between two families connected by marriage is clearly seen in the special role of the maternal uncle, who has a powerful influence over his sister's child and over the family into which his sister's child is born.

N *563 M 421 The basis on which Monguor property is divided is that fact that, under the patrilineal system, the entire extended family is the owner of fields, cattle, houses, agricultural implements and money. Individual property is restricted to a few personal possession. The sons of a man who has died, are entitled to receive and divide their father's share.

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III. Relationships between the Chinese, the Chinese-speaking Moslems, and the Sedentary Tibetans

N [171] [241] N *563 621 [631] [622] N [701] Agricultural Chinese, Chinese Moslems and sedentary Tibetans all live in villages for the sake of protection and in accordance with a tradition of settlement that is continent-wide and probably older than history. The area is typical of the farming economy that is found all the way across the northern half of China. The crops are the same and the manner of life is similar. The villages, whether Chinese, Moslem or Tibetan, are alike not only as to spatial characteristics but as to their function in the social organization. The counties may be administratively divided into districts, "roads", or "directions", but the basic unit of control is the village, with a village head-man who is largely responsible for the maintenance of law and order and for the observance of government regulations. The larger villages have their own "family protective associations" and organized units of the militia. The smaller ones have no such organization, but are recognized by the county administration as self-administering units.

N *563 621 631 It is not clear whether there are such intermediate divisions as hsiang, chen and chü between the villages and the county organizations. It seems probable, however, since the National Government has put the Northwest provinces under an administration system similar to that of other provinces. In practice, such divisions

*563 must have had few, if any, effects upon everyday life, or the village
621 units would not have been so important in the local administrative
631 system. The very common pattern of market-town surrounded by
farm villages exists in the Northwest. Like those in China Proper,
*563 the Northwest market towns are the outgrowth of those villages which
361 are situated on main roads or at strategic points. The market
632 towns fill the same kind of social, economic and cultural roles here
443 as they do in other parts of the country.

In areas where both Chinese and Chinese-speaking Moslem
*563 farmers live, there are three types of rural communities. The
621 first includes the all-Chinese villages which greatly resemble
the villages in North China.. From twenty to thirty families con-
stitute the average population in these villages. When some peculiar
[443] quality, such as its location on a well-travelled road, makes a
[632] village acceptable to an entire district, it becomes a market town.
Eventually it may grow to the proportions of a city. Whenever the
village grows so large that those whose fields lie on the periphery
can no longer go back and forth each day, it begins to break up.
The families with the very distant fields become the nucleus of a
new settlement.

*563 In a Chinese village communal life is exhibited in several ways.
621 One is by religious observance, particularly the conduct of the
771 ritual connected with ancestor-worship and veneration of the past.
At stated times throughout the year - especially at the New Year,
and during the second, fifth, and eighth moons - festivals honoring
certain deities or commemorating religious events are held. Such
a festival is always a communal matter. All contribute money for
[794] the furnishing of trappings proper to the affair, some are concerned
with organizing the celebration, others carry images in the proces-
sion, and still others collaborate with the priests, - Buddhist or
Taoist, - in the performance of the various ceremonies. Such
religious festivals are not altogether a matter of the calendar, for
additional services are often held in times of drought or other
community disasters.

*563 The village or community theatrical is another communal activity.
545 Generally the plays are given for the enjoyment of the people. The
621 entire community shares the responsibilities and enjoys the fun.
In small Chinese hamlets in the Northwest even a funeral is very
*563 much a community affairs. Virtually everyone has a part in the
621 mourning, feasting, burying, and attendant religious activities.
769 Also annually in early spring during the feast of Ch'ing-ming, the
[764] Chinese in the Northwest, as in other parts of China, decorate the
graves, make various offerings of food and drink, burn paper
money and incense, and bewail the dead. The graveyards are not
necessarily communal, but Ch'ing-ming is observed universally
and no one can abstain from participation without arousing comment

* 563 Unless the occupations of the minority are specialized and not coveted
463 by members of the dominant group, there is always the phenomenon
621 of the majority group attempting to usurp the callings or occupational
578 opportunities of the minority group and hoping that the minority
group eventually will leave the community. Under such conditions,
antagonisms always exist between the two groups in the same farm
community.

*563 The Chinese in the predominantly Tibetan districts are organized
621 in exactly the same way as the Chinese in the predominantly Chi-
184 nese Moslem areas. Again the village is the important unit of
organization, the village organization is integrated in the county,
and the village authorities are answerable to the county magistrate.
[651] These Chinese villages are taxed far more heavily than the Tibetan
villages. The Tibetan villages, in many aspects are similar to the
Chinese villages. Generally, the Chinese villages are in predom-
[361] inantly Chinese sections while the Tibetan villages are in predom-
inantly Tibetan country. But some of the Chinese villages are
quite far up in Tibetan country. In their culture these conform
more to the Tibetan pattern than to the Chinese. In both groups
the village is of supreme importance as a social and political unit
[162] of organization. The villages are much alike in size, the average
village having a population of between twenty and thirty families.

In organization and function the Chinese and Tibetan villages show differences. Within the organization of the Chinese village there is not only a compact family unit but a clan system as well. The sedentary Tibetans, on the other hand, have no clearly defined clan organization, and their family is much looser than among the Chinese. Nevertheless, the Chinese village organization permits a considerable degree of individualism, whereas the Tibetan village communal activity completely overshadows individual activity. This is probably because the Chinese family and clan compete with the village organization, thereby acting as a check on the exercise of village authority. It may be that Chinese frontier life necessarily entails greater liberty of action and individual initiative. In everything related to communal properties and communal activities, as well as in all matters regulating the time of planting, harvesting, etc., the Tibetan village acts with a solidarity and unanimity that is comparatively lacking in a Chinese village community in the same area. In spite of these differences, the subsistence routine is substantially the same for the Chinese farmer and the Tibetan farmers, and the village of the one has a close resemblanc to that of the other.

* 563 Although there is a great deal of culture contact between the
628 Chinese and Tibetans in the same areas, an interesting feature is
that contact is quite one-sided. The agents, almost without excep-
177 tion, are Chinese. The contact can be called reciprocal only to the

S
793 them. Nowadays these are more cases of private feuds than law
[692] suits. Even when a Qazi exercises his judicial powers, he has
S no authority to enforce the verdict. The position of the reis is
[794] purely symbolic, and that of the Mutaki merely one of consultative powers.

S F. The Chinese Moslems

N The Chinese Moslems are a different sect of Islam than the
795 Turkic Moslems in Sinkiang. They constitute a religious and, to
563 an extent, a racial minority in China proper. The same is not
true of the Turkic Moslems, who form a major section of the
population in Sinkiang, and who in reality are not a national and
religious minority. However, in Northwest China, the number
of Chinese Moslems is much greater than in other parts of
China, with the possible exceptions of Yunnan and Peking. Many
differences between the Chinese Moslems and the Turkic Moslems
S
N stem from this factor alone. The Chinese Moslems are
795 much influenced by an environment which is foreign to Islam.
They have accepted many of the local customs and have integrated
them into their own rites. This process has been both
voluntary and forced. The Chinese Moslems, through the process
of intermarriage and living within a majority of non-Moslems,
have absorbed some of their customs, perhaps without
realizing it. To avoid persecution and suspicion from the rest of
the people, they have been forced to adopt others.

S
N Another important factor in the shaping of Islam in China is
[361] the virtual isolation of the Chinese Moslem communities from
other centers of Islam, an isolation which has existed for many
centuries. Islam in China has been deprived of many of the contributions
made later to the religious doctrine and practice by
various philosophic and juristic scholars in Western Asia.
Islam in China, consequently, developed its own peculiar characteristics
(mainly in ritual). The Chinese Moslems have not
contributed anything of major importance to the fields of Islam's
philosophy and theological thought.

S
N The Chinese Moslems are commonly called Dungans. They
795 themselves do not use the name, but term themselves Hui-hui
101 or Hui tzu. This appellation is applied by the Chinese to all
Moslems, whether residents of China proper or Turkestan.
Islam is commonly designated Hui-Hui Chiao (the religion of the
Hui Hui). It is also known as Ch'ing-chen Chiao (The Pure and
True Religion), or the Hsiao-chiao (minor religion) as contrasted
with Confucianism, the "Great Religion." The Communists
refer to them as Hui. The meaning and origin of the name
Hui-hui are not known. There are many varying opinions on the
subject. Some say Hui-hui is a corruption of the name Uighur;
others, that it is equivalent to the Arabic term Islam, the character
Hui signifying "to return".

/Chinese Moslems/

000 acter Hui signifying "to return."

S N 795 361 The Chinese Moslems live in small, closely knit communities, organized around the mosques. The Moslem community is usually set apart from the general Chinese community. The Moslems may form a whole village, or a certain suburb or section of town. The communities are organized on a local basis and there is no higher religious authority that unites all the communities. The mosques, the religious and social centers of the Moslem communities, are maintained independently.

S N 795 182 At least ostensibly, the religious attitude of the Chinese Moslims is characterized by moderation. They make concessions to the ruling power, hoping thus to gain security for person and property. The more capable and resolute of those who enter into government service take part in the ceremonial of the national cult.

S N 795 794 [346] The Moslems in the Northwest do not publicly practice their religion, nor do they advertise it. In some cases their mosques are dissimulated, so that they cannot be distinguished easily from other houses in the village. They are quite lax in their observances of the different rituals connected with Islam. The Chinese Moslems do not regularly attend religious services in S N [793] [782] the mosque. Aside from the ahung (the religious leader of the Chinese Moslem community) and the extremely orthodox people they do not pray five times a day, but once or twice at most. The noon service is the most popular one, and the place of worship is limited to the mosque. The manner of calling for prayer differs in China from that in Western Asia. The Muazzin does not chant the call to prayer. He stands on the roof of the mosque and shouts the invitation to prayer and may strike a special wooden instrument called ta-p'an-tzu. Most Moslems will ignore the worship time if it interferes with their daily business. Except for some minor differences, the prayer ceremony is conducted in a manner similar to that in Western Asia.

S N [562] Women are not allowed to attend the mosques where the men pray. In some of the larger communities, the women may have a mosque of their own, but in most places they worship individually.

The Friday service draws the best attendance, although certainly not all nor even the majority of believers. On this day the sermon is delivered by the Khatib, a special person, not necessarily a religious leader, elected for the purpose. It is usually in Arabic, and few of those present can understand it.

S N 795 785 796 203 [184] The Fast of Ramadan is one of the rituals which is observed with a degree of strictness in Moslem communities throughout China. In many places there are special messengers who go about the Moslem quarters calling out the times for observing and breaking the fast. Messengers also go around at night lest

S
N referring to "those who pray openly," contrasted with Khafira
795 (identified as the Old Sect) or "those who pray secretly."

All the sects described above belong to the Sunni order; there
are extremely few Shi'is among the Chinese Moslems. These
sects have retained continuous hostility, which has manifested
itself in violence, at times even resulting in bloodshed.

N H. The Salars

795 The Salars are another group of Moslems, distinct from the
563 Dungans, who live in China. They differ considerably from the
[197] Chinese Moslems in appearance, and they speak a form of cor-
[142] rupt Turkish.

N The Salars live in Hsün-hua-t'ing on the right bank of the
795 Huang-ho, and in the surrounding villages. They are also found
[361] on the road from Sining to Ho-chow. In religion they are Sunnis
of the Hanefite School. They are not very strict in their observ-
ance of the different Moslem rites, and are known to be heavy
drinkers. Although they do not observe the rites of Islam in a
strict manner, they feel very strongly about their belonging to
N the world Moslem community and are quite fanatic in this re-
[669] spect. They have participated in many of the rebellions against
the Han Chinese in the Northwest. Their clergy, who are greatly
[793] respected, are leaders of the Salar community.

N Unlike the Chinese Moslems, the Salars have not assimilated
[177] many of the customs and beliefs of the Chinese. They do not
[212] burn incense nor pay special reverence to their ancestors. They
have a much better knowledge of the Arabic language than have
the Dungans, and even the lowest classes are acquainted with
the Arabic alphabet. They are said to have received their
present form of religion from Ma Ming-hsin (Muhammad Amin).

III. Religious Life of the Chinese in the Northwest

N A. Sites of Religious Traditions

346 The Northwest includes what was once the economic and ad-
778 ministrative center of the Chinese Empire. In the city of Sian
and its surroundings, some of the older relics of religious in-
stitutions can still be seen. The memory of the great culture
heroes of the past is particularly strong here and many of them
are still worshipped in temples and shrines. Foremost among
them is the Great Yü, tamer of the flood, who, according to
legend, made life in this region possible by draining the excess
water off through the narrows of T'ung-kuan. Among the famous
Buddhist temples of Sian is the Wo-lung-ssu (The Temple of the
Sleeping Dragon) which was built in Han times and has been a
place of continuous reverence by emperors and peasants ever
since. It contained a famous mural of the Kuanyin by Wu Tao-zu

S
829 fication of a non-Moslem is not likely to be a very spontaneous
668 movement on the part of the Turkic people, nor is it conceivable
177 that they "deeply love and warmly support the Central People's
Government." To most of them it is a remote government in a foreign country - China - to which most of them have never been, and it is very difficult for them to visualize it as the government to whom they owe supreme allegiance.

S
631 Direct authority is represented by the local government bodies.
554 Although composed of many Chinese officials, the representatives
668 of the local population fill prominent positions in the local government also. There is a certain amount of pride felt by the local
177 people owing to the fact that some of the important leaders are
829 Turkic Moslems, who have achieved a position of importance in the government. It is quite likely that leaders like Burkhan and Saifuddin are quite popular among the Turks of Sinkiang. The Turkic refugees abroad and the strongly nationalistic-minded ones who still are in Sinkiang, look at these leaders participating in the Chinese Communist regime as traitors cooperating with the oppressive powers, rather than national heroes.

II. The Mongols of the Northwest

N
A. Introductory Remarks

*563 Northwest China is the arena for some 150,000 Mongolian
• [361] herdsmen. Although uniform in respect to their Buddhistic-
[162] nomadic culture and language (with the exception of the Monguors
S who speak a Mongolian-Tibetan mixed dialect) they do not con-
563 stitute a political or areal unit, living as they do thousands of
[361] miles apart, in the northeastern area of Sinkiang, around the Tsai-
[162] dam swamps area, in the Edzingol area, in the northern part of Kansu and even in some enclaves in Shensi. Since Chingis Khan, they have never constituted a political unit, although Legdan Khan united the major parts of them into a short-lived empire (see Historical Setting).

The reason for this lack of unity is first and above all, the fact that the Mongols of the Northwest area are outnumbered by Chinese (30 million) and Turks (4 million). The second reason is the treatment by the Manchus who shifted the Mongol banners from place to place in connection with the Manchu, Sibo, and Solon banners, who constituted the main and more reliable garrisons in the frontier area. The reliability of the Mongolian garrisons was partly due to the policy toward the banner and tribal leaders who were made wang (king) or nobles of various ranks.

N
B. Views of the People with Respect to their own Country

*563 The average Mongol of the Northwest is fully aware of the fact
829 that he belongs to a minority and that all he possesses are his
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/Mongols of the Northwest/

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829 These feelings and emotional attitudes were hardly sufficient to
*563 arouse animosity or hatred toward the Chinese but rather an un-
S justified and unwarranted feeling of superiority. The progressive
829 advancement of Chinese settlers, however, who gradually took
563 over lot after lot of their pasture land led not only to hatred but
resulted in petty uprisings, so that even the Manchu government
several times issued laws against Chinese advancements, which
were hardly ever observed. Complaints of the Mongol leaders
did not help and they were numerically too weak for military action.

Only in the case of the sedentary Mongols of the Northwest, the Monguors, such problems never arose, as they had become so strongly sinified that their tribal leaders were considered by the Chinese themselves as Chinese officials with a reputation of absolute loyalty.

S D. Attitudes toward the Communist Regime
N Throughout the history of the Mongols, their pattern of living,
(198) internal and external, changed very little. Their families con-
(596) stituted auls, the auls, clans and the clans, tribes. Besides this
(614) structural organization, there existed the military institutions of
(619) banners and leagues. The internal order was always strict and
(701) the laws and regulations hard. A leader who was not strict and
(622) hard would hardly be considered as a leader and the history of
(554) the Mongols shows that a strong leader always evoked their respect
and found them to be submissive followers.

In view of this fact there is little doubt that the Mongols of the
N Northwest will respect the iron hand of Peking, even though probably
829 with mixed emotions. The creation of autonomous chous (districts)
*563 populated only or overwhelmingly by Mongols might give them a
*668 certain feeling of self-determination and cultural autonomy. The
177 organization of veterinarian stations which take care of their live-
[634] stock will certainly be welcome to the nomads; the organization of
[242] a widespread educational system might be another asset for the
S Communists as it fosters Mongolian language and promotes litera-
829 ture written in Mongolian. The establishment of permanent
563 winter sites, on the other hand, which is contradictory to Mongol
668 customs and above all the threatening collectivization of their
177 [634] livestock, which is the Mongols' highest and greatest treasure,
[242] are negative aspects. This, of course, refers to the present
S generation only. The younger and youngest generation, subject to
N (361) a very vivid and propagandistic education will undoubtedly change
their attitude toward the present regime, a process for which
the Khalkhas of Outer Mongolia are a classic example. (see also
IMAR Handbook, same section).

N III. The Chinese, Chinese Moslems and Sedentary Tibetans
829 *563 An attempt at a cohesive description of popular attitudes among
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N *563 /Chinese, Chinese Moslems and Sedentary Tibetans/
829 the Chinese in the Northwest meets with several obstacles. The
S 563 one most difficult to overcome is the lack of attitudinal uniformity
829 due to a multitude of historical, environmental and social factors
which have molded the people's behavior in the Northwest. There
N is, to begin with, the difference between the urban and the rural
*563 situation, which even though prevalent all over China, has made
369 for a specially pronounced diversity in the Northwest. Generally
829 speaking, in centers like Sian or Lanchou attitudes are met with
S which do not differ too much from those prevalent in other cities
563 of China. It has to be taken into account, though, that Sian has
369 been the capital of the Chinese Empire for centuries up to about
829 one thousand years ago, and this fact still shapes certain attitudes of the citizens of Sian today. Lanchou, on the other hand, is most definitely a frontier city, the last major outpost of Chinese civilization with an ostentatious pride in local traditions and relics of a cultural or esthetic nature, but open, on the other hand, to a colorful mixture of influences coming from a variety of peoples beyond the pale. The urban attitudes prevalent in Sian and Lanchou thus differ perceptively and both cities differ in certain respects from other Chinese metropolises. Their peculiarities influence in turn urban-rural and social tensions in a specific way.

The Chinese rural scene, on the other hand, displays a variety of factors accounting for attitudinal diversity. There are the differences of the loess-cave dwellers and the mud-hut dwellers, those of the irrigational farmer and the one on hills or mountain slopes; there are regions of compact minorities or dominant majorities of Moslems and finally, regions along the few great thoroughfares and regions of remote seclusion.

The picture gains in complexity in the real frontier areas, Western Kansu, Chinghai and Sinkiang, where the Chinese constitute a minority. Here the diversity of peoples with whom the Chinese have contact, the geographical differences, the professional differences, differences of the duration of stay, of the home province of the settlers account for attitudinal patterns which change from settlement to settlement.

S What is attempted in the following pages is, in view of the
N difficulties, and furthermore, in view of the pitifully scanty coverage
[128] of the area in the literature, to present a few samples of pertinent
[129] observations, which might add up to some general notions. In the selection, stress has been laid on the frontier regions, as the regions within the pale, reference still can be made to the General Handbook.

N In their book, The Gobi Desert (New York, 1944), Mildred
712 Cable and Francesca French describe the Chinese people's life
•361 in the fortress of Chia-yu-kuan in Western Kansu, which they
[127] visited in the thirties: "Inside of the fortress, life was divided into three distinct sections, each of which had an existence quite

712 different from the others. All the inns and shops were in the
361 suburb. The people who owned them were descendants of a long
line of old residents who took pride in the very exclusiveness which
was imposed by their isolation. Few of them ever left the place,
and many had never even seen the neighboring town of Suchow.
An inner gate led to the military section of the fortress, where
life was entirely different. The yamen, built in traditional Chinese
712 style, was the center of garrison life, and here the general and
701 his family lived, guarded day and night by sentries! Officers
marched in and out, and much official business was done, for
this was an important military center and the officer in command
held a high rank. Unlike the old residents, the military hated the
place and seized every chance of being away from it, bitterly
resenting the appointment to such a lonely outpost, and longing to
be transferred elsewhere. Nothing would have induced them to
walk outside the Northwest Gate where that fateful Gobi Desert
stretched, and their eyes always turned longingly to the city where,
twenty miles away, there was solace, gaiety and life.

712 If the men disliked Kiayukwan (Chia-yu-kuan), the women hated
512 it. There is nothing to do here all day but sit and listen to that
517 howling wind, they would say frequently.

The ladies of the yamen would gather in each other's rooms,
[525] play ma-jong for small stakes, sip tea and gossip. Often the
[521] game was prolonged until midnight, with interludes for drawing
[276] on the opium pipe, but the next morning's reaction brought a
fierce hatred of this place where desert demons hid themselves
in dust-clouds and whistled through every crevice of the crazy
[567] buildings. The little slave girls learnt to dread the days of blizzard when their mistresses' nerves were tensed and blows were
dealt out irritably for the slightest offense.

[796] Each festival of the year was the occasion for a welcome social
function, and during the summer months life was made brighter by
[574] the frequent exchange of visits with the officials from Suchow.
[545] Twice a year a theatrical troupe visited the fortress, and for the
three days of its performance all the inhabitants enjoyed themselves and made merry. But it was soon over, and when the
properties were packed and carts carried both actors and their
belongings elsewhere, life in the fortress relapsed into desolating
stagnation.

712 The third category of human beings to be met in Kiayukwan
485 were the travellers who came, lodged for a night or two at the
484 inns, and forthwith went their ways. Every sunset and every sunrise they arrived, some taking night stages and some travelling
by day, but all were travel worn and weary....

484 These formed the stream of living men and women who moved
712 up and down the great road, acquainted with life and full of knowledge about distant places. They were familiar with the large

181 use it. In this little backwater town large business deals were
436 effected, but each roll of dollars received for payment was
opened, the contents carefully examined, and the individual coins
valued a little higher or a little lower according to the Tunhwang
standard." (pp. 69-70).

423 The landowners in the Tunhwang district are mainly Chinese
whose ancestors were established here very long ago. The Chi-
181 nese farmers are more conservative than the town folks. The rural
369 rural pattern here is different from that of other parts of the North-
241 west. Here the farmsteads are dotted over the area, each stands
in the center of its own land and each at a considerable distance
• 361 from the other. The larger farms are surrounded by a high wall
[351] which is a small fortification, and inside the wall is a substantial
[342] house made of sun-dried bricks and excellent timber. Most of
[621] the farmsteads are spacious and built to accommodate large num-
[614] bers of people, for it is customary that all the members of a clan
live together in their generations.

The author of The Gobi Desert recorded another interesting
631 feature of the Tunhwang oasis. The record says that Tunhwang
is divided into as many sections as there are prefectures in the
whole of the province of Kansu. Its colonization brought men
from all areas, who were anxious to honor the cities which they
represented, by erecting temple buildings. The result is that the
traveller wanders through the oasis as through a replica of the
whole province of Kansu, stepping from the section called after
the town of Chingchow to that called Liangchow, from Kaotai to
Pingfan, or from Pingliang to Titao, in the course of an afternoon
[532] stroll. Near one of these temples was a very old carved stone
[172] figure of a man, which was not an idol but was said to represent
a historic personage.

Of the Chinese people of the wayside in the Gobi Desert
157 Miss Cable writes: "The intense isolation of the inhabitant of a
485 small oasis, and the extraordinarily low standard of life imposed
[511] upon him, produce a strange mentality. His normal condition is
torpor. He sits or lies on his mud bed and thinks of nothing.
Only when a traveler arrives does he experience the discomfort
of rousing himself, but then though it may be cold or windy, he
must leave the pleasant stuffiness of his bed-living-room, throw
off the greasy coverlet which he has drawn over his crossed legs,
come into the open and give the service, which is demanded of
him as innkeeper. The life of the innkeeper's wife is more bare
and poor. Clothing, which has some place in the thought of
nearly every woman, is, to her, absolutely nothing but a protection
from cold and a covering for her nakedness. The other incidents
of her life are concerned with food and the birth of her
children. She knows that her husband has some money, but she
has never thought of money as a means of securing comforts

484 cities and the great waterways of China, and had traversed her
712 wide plains by the iron track at speed which seemed fabulous to
the owners of these little shops. The static inhabitants saw them
come, heard them talk, watched them go, but failed to understand
the matters of which they spoke, for, to them everything which
they had never seen was unreal, vague, remote and seemed to
bear no relation to daily life. Enough for them that today they
[432] had sold three boxes of matches, two packets of cigarettes and
handful of salt. They cared little for travellers' tales and probably
believed none of them....

712 The restless soldiers of the garrison rushed to and from the
512 large town, but the old inhabitants cared for none of these things,
[701] and when the fortress gates were closed each night they put up
[352] the shutters of the little shops and crept under miserable cover-
[276] lets to lie on the mud kangs, fill their opium pipes and escape into
the land of illusion and dreams, which was the only wider horizon
that they knew." (pp. 17-20).

361 While she was visiting in Tun-huang Miss Cable observed:
443 "The people of Tunwhang (Tun-huang) viewed themselves as the
(186) elite of Gobi land, and were abnormally proud of their oasis.
They had plenty of money to spend and opened their markets freely
to goods from other places, but prided themselves on being a self-supporting community, not only in respect of food, but also in
regard to brides and bridegrooms, and they did not approve of
marriages arranged between their own children and those of other
181 towns." (ibid.) The people in this district were very conservative.
436 "One sign of its deep-seated conservatism," observed Miss Cable,
441 "was the backward system of money exchange which it retained.
Long after the silver dollar had become the common basis of coinage on the main road, Tunhwang businessmen looked askance at it, and preferred the shoe of silver which was chipped down, weighed up and exchanged for copper coinage. Here again Tunhwang set its standard by allowing one hundred worn and valueless cash to be introduced into each string of a thousand. It became therefore worthwhile to collect these useless copers in other towns, cart them to Tunhwang and dispose of them there. When the reluctance to admit the silver dollar was finally overcome, merchants still discriminated between different issues and refused one or the other according to fancy. The coin stamped with the dragon was depreciated in favor of one designated as the 'standing man' which was Hongkong currency. The dollar bearing the head of Yuan Shih-kai found favor, and for some reason the third-year issue was more highly valued than any other, but when a new coin stamped with the head of Sun Yat-sen appeared, this Gobi town absolutely refused to recognize it because the new president's effigy was small and unimpressive. No other explanation was offered than the words 'The head seems small', but no one would use it.

From T'ungKuan to Hsian is a distance of 290 li, which

491 can be covered in three long marches. The road, a broad tree-lined cart track, lies up the valley plain of the Wei River, with the great barrier range of the Ch'inling Shan on the left hand and the river on the right. The plain is [712] one vast wheat-field, dotted with peculiar walled farms, each a formidable little fortress in itself; they are relics of the 563 great Mahomedan rebellion and form a characteristic feature of the landscape in most parts of Shensi and Kansu. Nowadays the Mahomedans of Shensi are a negligible quantity, the majority having withdrawn westwards into Kansu, where they form an exceedingly important and powerful element in the population.

361 Forty li from T'ungkuan the district city of Huayin Hsien is reached, the inns lying in the suburb of Huayin 788 Miao, five li east of the walled town. This latter village is the starting-point for the sacred mountain, the Hua Shan, a portion of the Ch'inling range. Seventy li further on the empty city of Hua Chou is passed, and 50 li beyond that Weinan Hsien, the centre of a particularly rich agricultural district, is reached.

484 The traffic on the roads of this fertile and populous plain is very great, and it is one of the absurdities of modern China that no railway should yet connect Hsian, the 000 metropolis of the North West, with the coast. Railway construction on the plains of Central Shensi means little more than laying the rails on the necessary embankment and building a number of small bridges across the streams which flow down from the Ch'inling Shan into the Wei River. And while these rich and populous plains in the centre of China are innocent of every vestige of railway construction, a line has been built at great difficulty and expense through the mountains north of Peking past Kalgan to end in the air beyond Tatung in Northern Shensi. The Hsian line is a section of the Belgian Lung Hai railway referred to above, which has for the moment come to a stop at Kuanyint'ang in Honan. Failing railways the construction of a few good trunk roads fit for motor traffic would be of enormous advantage to the province and could be undertaken, as far as the plains of Central Shensi are concerned, at comparatively small cost. There can scarcely be another civilized country in the world which would be

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487 712 All along this road across the eastern end of the Ch'inling ranges a large proportion of the hill tops are crowned with walled strongholds called *Chai* which serve as refuges for the inhabitants of the farms and villages in the valleys in times of trouble. These fortified hill tops are a characteristic feature of S.E. Shensi and N.E. Szechuan. The better ones contain houses all ready for receiving the refugees, while others are merely walled shells inside which the owners erect mat sheds or temporary huts. Nearly all are unapproachable except by most precipitous footpaths. Six years ago, in the comparatively peaceful days of Manchu rule, these *chaitzu* were generally in ruins and fallen into disuse; nowadays they have mostly been repaired at a cost of many thousands of taels and have been in pretty constant use during the troubles which have afflicted these parts ever since the revolution of 1911. It is a regrettable but indisputable fact that public security in the interior of China has steadily deteriorated and that the ravages of brigands have everywhere increased during recent years since the establishment of the Republic.

487 133 Leaving Niuerhch'uan on the next day, we followed down the valley, which contracts to a gorge and is rather difficult for loaded mules, for an hour's march. Here the gorge debouches on to the valley of a considerable stream, the Shêch'uan Ho (lower down called apparently the Chia Ho), flowing like most of the rivers of Shensi from N.W. to S.E. Our path turned up the valley of this stream and followed it in a westerly direction for the rest of the way to the large market village of Fenghuangtsui, 80 li from Niuerhch'uan. The valley is hemmed in by rocky jungle-clad mountains and is uncultivated till within 15 li of Fenghuangtsui, where a tributary of equal volume from the north joins the stream. From this point on there are rice fields and a succession of hamlets. 361 Fenghuangtsui is the largest village in the district and contains many more families than Chenan itself. Apart from these occasional townships there is marked absence of villages in these mountains, and one usually travels all day long without passing anything but scattered farmsteads and huts.

487 133 The next day's march was a long and tiring one called 90 li. The trail leaves the main valley of the Shêch'uan Ho

CHAPTER III

FROM HSINGAN UP THE HAN VALLEY TO HANCHUNG

Hsingan and the resources of the Han valley—Hanyin—Shihch'uan—Hsihsiang—Kulupa—Catholics and Protestants—Hanchung—Northern troops in the Han valley.

36 [634] HSINGAN FU is now a first class district city known as Ank'ang Hsien. It lies on the southern bank of the Han River at the head of a small but very fertile plain, where the river emerging from gorges flows for a few miles through more open country before disappearing into the mountains again. It consists of two cities, called the old and the new. The old city which is the commercial centre and contains most of the shops and general population is built right on the river from which it is protected by an embankment. A mile to the south lies the new city, a much smaller enclosure, containing residences of gentry and retired officials, Government schools, etc. The new city lies on higher ground and is said to have been built as a refuge in time of flood. The alluvial plain between the two cities is enclosed by stoutly built dykes running from the river up to the rising ground to the south. We were well housed in a Government building in the new city which forms a pleasant residential quarter as compared with the crowded streets of the old.

439 241 ,35 Hsingan is an important commercial centre and serves as a gateway into the whole basin of the upper Han, the Yangtzu's longest tributary. This upper Han basin may be likened to a miniature edition of the province of Szechuan, an extremely rich mountain region intersected by innumerable little fertile valleys and plains, with Hanchung, the administrative capital, comparable to Chengtu, Hsingan, the commercial gateway, to Chungking, and the Han with its gorges and rapids to the Yangtzu. To complete the likeness many parts of the Han basin are just as red as the famous "red basin" of Szechuan. A great variety of products are collected at Hsingan from this rich region and shipped down river to Laoho K'ou and Hankow, such as cereals, vegetable oils, fruits, nuts, varnish, wood oil, silk, tea,

[p.29]

Hanyin T'ing, now called Hanyin Hsien, a third class 634 district, is a prosperous little place lying at the head of the fertile Yo River valley, and, like most of the Han basin towns, is more like a Szechuan than a Shensi city.

From Hanyin to Shihch'uan Hsien is a day's march, 487 called 90 li. The path continues westwards up the narrowing 133 valley leaving the main stream which comes down from the north on the right hand. After about 15 li the valley ends [243] in low hills skilfully terraced into rice-fields, up which the trail runs to reach a low divide, some 600 feet above and two hours' march from Hanyin. This is the first obstacle to a Hsingan-Hanchung railway, but from here on till it reaches the eastern end of the Hanchung plain near Yang Hsien there will be many difficulties to surmount. From the pass the track, entering the district of Shihch'uan, descends through a defile and then through terraced rice fields amongst the red clay hills to the valley of the Ch'ih Ho, a stream flowing down from the north, and reaches the township of Ch'ihho P'u, 45 li from Hanyin and at about the same elevation. The same mountain range, which is further on pierced by the Ch'ih Ho in a gorge, continues on the left hand and the same red clay hills on the right. The path continues down the valley for an hour's march, and then leaves it to climb over a spur to the north, and so into the valley of the Han, here no wider than the river bed, and flowing from north to south. For the rest of the way to Shihch'uan the trail runs up the Han along the mountain side on the left bank.

Shihch'uan, a third class Hsien, lies right on the river. [361] It is an important strategic point in these parts as the trail from Hsian across the Ch'inling Shan *via* Ningshan T'ing here debouches on to the Han and the Hsingan-Hanchung road.

The next stage to Ch'a Chen, called 80 li, is a rather dangerous one for pack animals. Crossing the Han by a [491] ferry the trail runs up the gorges of the Han, a smaller edition of those of the upper Yangtzu, being ledged in the cliff side some distance above the water. In places it is narrow and there are some corners which are difficult to negotiate; but we met with no accidents, partly because the assistance so constantly rendered to us by the local officials included repairs to bad and dangerous portions of the trail.

487 Ch'a Chen is a village on the river, already in the district of Hsihsiang, which is an extended one. Here the 133 track, leaving the river, ascends a glen to the S.W., and after reaching a height of about a thousand feet above the Han runs westwards along a mountain slope, with a steep wooded range trending east and west on the left hand, and a series of spurs with intervening glens falling away to the Han on the right. Thirty-five li from Ch'a Chen the path descends some 500 feet to a village lying in the valley of a stream which issues from a gorge in the mountains to the south and flows north towards the Han, and then continuing westwards over another of the lateral ridges descends into a maze of wooded hills and gullies, leaving the mountains to the south out of sight. After two to three hours' march through these hills the trail ascends again to emerge on the top of bare downs, whence there is a fine view over Hsihsiang and the valley plain of the Muma Ho some 500 feet below. After descending into this plain, the Hsuan Ho, issuing from a gorge in the mountains to the south, is forded, and ten li further on, after rounding a low spur separating this stream from the Muma Ho and fording the latter, the district city of Hsihsiang is reached. This is a long day's march of 100 li.

361 Hsihsiang, the capital of a second class district, lies in another of the fertile valley plains of the Han basin, that of the Muma River. This valley runs from S.W. to N.E. and is here some miles broad. To the south a rocky range of mountains rises some thousands of feet above the plain towards the Szechuan border, and to the north are bare hills separating the valley from the Han. The district is one of the wealthiest in Southern Shensi, though these compare unfavourably, in spite of their apparently greater prosperity, as regards land tax receipts with many of the Wei valley districts, such as Weinan, Lint'ung, P'uch'eng, etc., owing, it is said, to much of the newly reclaimed land in the mountains not being on the old registers. A good deal of [248 silk is produced. This Han valley silk is inferior to the 438] Szechuan product, but is good enough to send to Kansu in exchange for the skins, furs, musk, deer-horns, and medicines of that province. Hsihsiang is also noted as the home of many famous literati and officials, and we were

palatially lodged in the house of a former provincial 361
governor.

There are at least three roads from Hsihsiang to Han-
chung, *via* Yang Hsien, Ch'engku Hsien, and Kulupa 487
respectively. We followed the latter, a three days' march.
The path runs up the Muma Ho for some 15 li, where the 133
hills close in on the river and bring the valley to an end,
and then runs through the hills and along the river to the
village of Matsung T'an, 50 li from Hsihsiang and, owing
to a small rapid, the head of navigation for small boats on
the Muma Ho, up to this point a placid stream. A little
further on the trail leaves the main stream, which here flows
down from the south, and turns up a small sandy tributary
to the south-west, then turns west through low wooded hills
intersected by rice fields, and then runs north-west up a
small valley to reach the village of Shaho K'an, 25 li from
Matsung T'an. This village lies, as its name implies, in a
pleasant region of low sandy hills covered with small woods
and intersected by rice fields much resembling Szechuan.
For some reason or other it is largely a Mahomedan com- [563]
munity with two mosques. In the woods one will often see 244
heaps of old timber, carefully stacked, for the growth of a 433
vegetable fungus called *mu erh* (wood ears), which is a much
esteemed delicacy and forms quite an important article of 262.
commerce in the Han valley.

The next stage is from Shaho K'an to Kulupa, a distance 437
of 70 li. The path runs up the narrow valley of the stream,
occasionally cutting across the low wooded hills, for 30 li 133
to the village of Sunchia P'ing, where the hills open out
and encircle a little rice plain. The district of Ch'engku is
here entered. The country is a maze of little wooded hills
intersected by gullies growing rice, and its chief feature is
the sand. The hills are of soft disintegrating sandstone, the
stream is a trickle of water in a sandy bed, and the path a
firm sand embankment between stream and rice fields. It
is evidently an old sandstone plateau cut up into hills and
gullies by the action of water, like so much of Szechuan.
North of the Ch'inling Shan such a country would be a
desert; here with the more abundant rainfall and its resultant
vegetation, it is a garden. From Sunchia P'ing the trail
continues westwards for a time up the stream, and then, as

than some of the veterans of the China Inland Mission, who 797
have passed the best part of their lives in isolated stations in Shensi and Kansu, such as Hsingan, Hanchung, Fenghsiang, Lanchou, Liangchou, Hsining, and Ninghsia, where months and years pass by without their ever seeing another foreigner. Their success in securing converts may not have been striking, but it is permissible to speculate on whether those whom they have secured are not more genuine Christians than the native Catholics. Often in spite of the basest ingratitude on the part of the Chinese, whose wounds and illnesses they tend one day, only to be passed by in the street with a scowl on the next, these noble men have laboured on year after year doing good and leavening, in however small a degree, the leaden mass of Chinese materialism. The results of their work may not always be apparent now, but they have sown a seed which cannot fail in time to produce a harvest of some kind, a harvest of which other Missions not infrequently reap the benefit.

We spent the night at Kulupa, where we were most hospitably received and entertained with a banquet.

The distance to Hanchung is called 75 li. After de- 133
scending for about an hour's march through gullies in the 487
hills the track debouches on to the famous plain of Hanchung,
a highly fertile, heavily cultivated, and densely populated [241]
region, stretching for a certain distance along both banks [361]
of the Han, and entirely surrounded by mountains. Another
two hours' march across this plain, past the boundary
between Ch'engku and Hanchung (Nanch'eng) districts,
brings one to the Han River here a shallow stream flowing
in a broad sandy bed, a hundred yards wide and a few feet
deep. The path runs along the banks of the Han for a
short distance, and then, crossing by a ferry, continues for [491]
ten li over the plain to reach the busy township of Shihpali
P'u. This village, which, as its name implies, is 18 li from
Hanchung, is developing into a large town, and is evidently [438]
the centre of the through trade from Szechuan, Kansu, and
Northern Shensi, which, as is usually the case in China, is
driven to avoid the capital by the various tolls and dues. [651]
From here the road runs west for the rest of the way to
Hanchung, passing through a rich suburb to reach the
East Gate of the city.

361 Hanchung, now officially known by the name of the
district as Nanch'eng, is a first class Hsien, and is one of
the three or four wealthiest and most populous cities in
the province. It lies in the centre of the rich cigar-shaped
plain of the Han valley, surrounded by mountains, and in
its situation and general appearance much resembles a
243 smaller edition of Chengtu in Szechuan. Two crops, wheat
followed by rice, are regularly raised on the plain. A con-
248 siderable quantity of silk is also produced and some cotton.
The situation of Hanchung in the centre of the most fertile
region in the province and at the point of intersection of
487 four trade routes, south to Szechuan, west to Kansu, north
438 to the Wei valley, and east down the Han to the coast,
has made it a considerable trade centre. For the same reason
it has always been one of the richest and most important
651 likin stations in the province, where the Chinese officials,
as elsewhere, do their best to throttle the transit trade and
kill the goose which lays the golden eggs by the excessive
imposition of dues and tolls. There are few more lucrative
offices in the province than that of Superintendent of the
Hanchung Likin.

631 Hanchung is the administrative capital of the upper Han
basin, and is the seat of a Taoyin and a Chenshoushih. The
position of the former is that of Civil Superintendent of the
magistrates in his jurisdiction. It is nowadays less important
than it was in the days of the Manchus. Since the abolition
of the hierarchical system of Tao, Fu, Chou, and Hsien,
the territorial administration is entirely in the hands of the
district magistrates acting directly under the Civil Governor
of the province. Thus the magistrates correspond directly
with the Governor and send copies of their despatches and
reports to the Taoyin, so that the latter is short-circuited
and the abolition of the post is sometimes advocated as being
superfluous. Under the old system the Hsien reported to
the Chou, the Chou to the Fu, the Fu to the Tao, and the
Tao to the Governor, each being responsible for the acts
of his subordinate. The position of Chenshoushih is that
of a General with powers of military administration. At the
present time, when things are more or less unsettled and
the military rule the roost, a Chenshoushih often has powers
which amount practically to those of an independent

• 361 Fop'ing, formerly a T'ing and now a third class Hsien, is a tiny place, a mere walled hamlet, containing only twenty or thirty families, and is probably about the smallest and most miserable of all the Hsien cities in China Proper. It lies in a cultivated valley, on the headwaters of a stream which apparently flows west and then south to join the Han near Ch'engku. This valley, over 6000 feet above sea level, is a quarter to half a mile wide, and surrounded on all sides by
[241] lofty mountains; it produces wheat, barley, maize, beans, peas, and potatoes, the latter being a most important crop
[262] in these mountains and in many parts the staple food of the people. The wheat was just showing above ground in the middle of May when it is ripe for harvest in the Hanchung plain. This valley appears to be the best and most populous part of the district which is entirely covered by high ranges, including T'aipai Shan in the N.W. corner. The post of magistrate is naturally not sought after. The Chinese consider Fop'ing a "dreadfully bitter" place (*k'u ti hen*), since there is no rice nor pork, nor other desirable food supplies; but to the foreigner the abundance of game, bracing healthy climate, and magnificent mountain scenery combine to make it a delightful spot. When the railway reaches Hanchung a month in Fop'ing in the autumn with dog and gun will form a pleasant way of spending a holiday.

We stayed a couple of days at Fop'ing, during which it
136 rained in the valley and snowed on T'aipai and the higher ranges. The cultivated fields round the city and the brush-covered hills to the south abound in pheasants, and I shot a good many cocks, which in spite of the season were excellent eating and a welcome addition to our food supplies. I have shot a great many cock pheasants in the highlands of Shensi and Kansu in the summer for food, as the parts where supplies are scarce and pheasants abundant always seem to coincide. The game-exporting companies have not yet extended their activities to these parts, which provide probably the best wild pheasant shooting in the world. The pheasants usually met with are the usual Mongolian ring-necked species, with the white ring growing less and less as one goes west till it dies out altogether in the mountains of the Kokonor border. These birds literally swarm in the corn fields in many of the cultivated valleys in the mountains

0045 plain. The excuses were unnecessary, as we had throughout
raised objections to the size of the party. Carts, which we
493 had not seen since leaving T'ungkuan, were sent to meet us
here in case anyone should want them, and the prospect of
a return to Hsian reclining in a cart, after scrambling up
and down the mountains on foot for so many days, was as
attractive to them as a passage in a train *de luxe* would be
to a travel-worn European. To me a journey in a Chinese
cart is a hideously uncomfortable method of travel, unless it
be across absolutely smooth Mongolian grass lands. A Chinese
cart travels along a Chinese paved road with a series of bumps
sounding like gunshots, which rapidly reduce a European to
pulp, but apparently have no effect on a Chinese.

From Hsink'outzu to Chouchih Hsien, a distance of 30 li,
the track descends across an undulating plain, which in
spring is one vast wheat-field dotted with hamlets and the
[361] walled farms peculiar to the Shensi plains. Chouchih, a
first class Hsien city and the centre of one of the rich
agricultural districts of the Wei valley, lies a few li to the
south of the Wei River. It is a regular northern city compared
to the crowded little towns of the Han valley, and
consists of little more than one long dusty street, open and
[241] empty looking. Wheat and cotton are the staples; a little
coarse silk is produced, the cocoon season being in full
[231] swing at the time of our visit during the latter half of May.
The two characters for Chouchih are rather unusual ones,
and mean "the winding of mountain streams," which
appears to refer to the Hei Ho and its tributaries which
flow down from Fop'ing and T'aipai Shan through deep
winding gorges to the plains. The district, like all those of
Central Shensi, is a very ancient one, dating back to the
beginnings of Chinese history. We were as usual quartered
in the magistrate's yamen, which happened to be in an
unusually good state of repair and provided most comfortable
175 accommodation. A study of the archives of these
district yamens of Central Shensi would doubtless prove
of great interest to the historian, since, where they have
not been destroyed during the revolution or the White
Wolf rebellion, they date back to very ancient days.

487 From Chouchih we turned westwards and travelled
across the plain to Mei Hsien, a distance of 100 li. The

road, here a good cart track, runs across an undulating wheat prairie, dotted with hamlets and walled farms, with 487 the Wei River out of sight on the right hand, and the great 243 barrier of the Ch'inling mountains on the left. Three town- [361] ships are passed, Yapei, Hengch'u, and Huaiya, the second being of some interest as the home of a famous Sung Dynasty philosopher. The amount of wheat grown on these plains 262 of Central Shensi is very great, especially nowadays since [276] the suppression of opium cultivation. There is no better wheat flour in China than that of Shensi, and it forms the staple food of the population, eaten in the form of bread (*mo*) and macaroni (*kua mien*). With this excellent wheat flour, good mutton, and plenty of game in the mountains, the foreign traveller is well off as regards food. A sound rule for travel in the interior of China is to avoid all tinned foods and rely on native supplies cooked in foreign style; the former only increase one's baggage loads and are quite unnecessary; native food made up in the native style is unappetising to most foreigners as well as being dangerously dirty.

Mei Hsien, a second class district city, is a small place, but like Chouchih is the centre of a rich agricultural region 241 comprising the plain between the Ch'inling Shan and the River Wei. The latter flows a few li to the north of the town. The city has suffered greatly from rebellions and brigandage during recent years.

From Mei Hsien to Fenghsiang Fu is called 110 li, but 477 the road being good and mostly level, the distance can be covered in one long march. The Wei River, in the dry [341] season a thick yellow stream a hundred yards wide and few feet deep, is crossed by a ferry and the road then runs westwards with the river on the left hand and a loess bluff on the right for 35 li to the village of Ts'aichia P'o. At the 244 time of our visit this low-lying land was almost entirely devoted to indigo and dotted with the peculiar-looking 366 brick pits in which the plants are mashed in preparing the dye. This is an old industry revived on account of the scarcity of aniline dyes. The indigo forms a useful rotation crop for the relief of the land exhausted by the everlasting wheat. We saw little else but wheat, cotton, and indigo during our tour of the loess of Central Shensi, growing on the uplands, river plains, and irrigated lands respectively.

000 the uplands, river plains, and irrigated lands respectively.
Leaving Ts'aichia P'o the road climbs the loess bluff to
133 the north, emerging on an undulating plain 500 feet above
487 the river, this being about the usual thickness of the loess
243 deposits in Western Shensi, and then runs N.E. across
● 361 wheat-growing prairies, past numerous hamlets and walled
farms, ascending gradually to reach Fenghsiang Fu.

Fenghsiang Fu, now a first class Hsien, lies at the western
361 end of the open Wei valley, where the mountains of the
Kansu border meet the Ch'inling Shan and bring these
fertile loess plains to an end. It is a large city and used to
be quite an important place, but its commercial prosperity,
destroyed during the rebellions and other troubles of the
past six years, has not yet revived. The inhabitants have
a bad reputation, and, like the town of Paochi on the Wei
River a day's journey to the south, it has in the past been
[491] a hotbed of the Ko Lao Hui. Its position near the junction
of the Ch'in Chou road into Kansu and the high road to
Szechuan gives it some importance, and cart tracks radiate
from it across the plain in all directions, ceasing abruptly at
the foot of the mountains.

descent, the path following along a winding ridge, and then 487 dropping into the valley of a streamlet, which leads after 133 an hour's march to the hamlet of Liangshê, 80 li from Fenghsiang, where we stopped the night. On the following day an easy march of 40 li down the valley, through cornfields full of pheasants, brought us to Linyu Hsien. The latter is a tiny city, the centre of a miserably poor third 634 class district, lost in the brigand-infested loess mountains [579] not far from the Kansu border. It is an isolated little place, lying on an unfrequented mule trail into Kansu *via* Lingt'ai. The magistrate, an intelligent young man of the student class, led a lonely and somewhat miserable existence, apart from the danger from brigands, and admitted that he only looked upon this, his first appointment, as a stepping-stone to something better. Most of the many magistrates we met took but little interest in their work, regarding their posts either as a necessary evil to be endured for a short time as a stepping-stone to something better, or as a means of getting rich quick. And yet their work of administration is really most interesting and affords many opportunities of improving the lot of the people. But they can hardly be blamed for taking so little interest in their districts in view of the present system under which they may at any moment have to make way for another place-hunter. Thus it often happened that we came across magistrates who, never leaving their dilapidated little yamens, had only the vaguest knowledge of the geography and inhabitants of their districts.

Life in Linyu city, as in countless other little Hsiens 361 buried in the interior of China, is that of the middle ages, 579 and the appearance of its streets and walls, with ancient cannon and gingals and heaps of stones all ready to hurl on the heads of an attacking force of brigands, has probably changed but little for hundreds of years. Revolutions, rebellions, and battles in the plains below, in which the contending forces pump lead at one another with modern rifles and machine guns, have little effect in these isolated hills, except that the brigands become more and more formidable from year to year.

Linyu lies on a loess bluff overlooking the junction of 487 two streams from the west and north, flowing in beds of 133 shale and sandstone at the bottom of deep narrow valleys

Where the loess has been washed away shales and sandstones 487 are revealed, and often right on the tops of the spurs there are outcroppings of a sort of conglomerate of waterworn 133 pebbles cemented together. The loess mountains in this neighbourhood are little cultivated, being covered with [233] poor-looking pasture, which supports scanty herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Finally there is a descent of a few hundred feet to reach the city of Yungshou Hsien, which lies a little below the crest of the ridge, on the shoulder of a spur up which ascends the Great West Road from the Hsian plains.

Yungshou consists of one street running up the ridge 361 and is merely a walled-in section of the big road; it is a replica of Linyu, with a little more life in it owing to its position on the Kansu highway. We had passed through it two years previously almost to a day on our way to the latter province, the season of the year being the end of May.

Our next objective was the district city of Ch'unhua 487 (locally Shunhua) distant two marches of 90 li each. Leaving 133 Yungshou we followed up the main road for a few li to regain the crest of the range, where I shot some cock pheasants in almost the identical spot as two years before, and then turned eastwards once more along the top of the ridge for 25 li to a cave village. Here the ridge ends in rolling uplands of loess, the beginning, from this side, of the great loess plateau of Western Shensi. The Belgian railway (Lung Hai) from Hsian to Lanchou will, it is said, follow up the Wei River, the line of the cart road being apparently too difficult; an easier route might perhaps be found following up the slope of this plateau through Sanshui district to Ch'ingyang, and thence through Northern Kansu. The upper portions of these rolling plains where [233] we met them are uncultivated and covered with poor sheep pasture, apparently owing to the lack of water, the one great drawback to the loess; and one might imagine oneself on the grasslands of Eastern Mongolia, until, on attempting to cross the plateau in any direction away from the trail, one almost immediately fetches up against a chasm in the loess with perpendicular walls perhaps hundreds of feet deep. Lower down these uplands are one vast cornfield immediately above the rock on which the loess rests. The 133 regularity of level and depth of the loess over wide areas, the invariable slope of the loess uplands in the same direction as the rivers and streams, i.e. all draining S.E. and the meeting-line of the light sandy loess and the heavier reddish loess, which can often be traced for miles at the same level, may also be noted in support of a water origin; while lastly there is the fact that the loess has nowhere, except in the extreme west, crossed the Ch'inling Shan, a continuous range, whereas it is piled high on either side of other ranges which are not continuous. These lines are written without access to books of reference of any kind, and it should be understood that they represent merely the impressions of a traveller with no scientific training, who has not the least intention of starting a controversy on the subject of a problem which has probably long been settled by competent scientists. But in spite of the fact that we have often seen loess at a height of 6000 feet or more, it is difficult to believe that it was not deposited there by water.

Yao Chou, now a second class Hsien, is quite a large 361 city for Northern Shensi, and about the most prosperous, 249 or rather least miserable, place we came across in that region. It lies, surrounded by indigo fields, in a narrow valley below the level of the loess uplands. We were here 701 joined by a *Lien* (company) of infantry, since the north of Shensi is, at the time of writing, so overrun with brigands, well armed and organized in bands many hundreds strong, that it would have been impossible for a party of Chinese officials to tour those districts with a smaller escort. Curiously 609 enough, owing to the extraordinary change which has occurred in the position of the foreigner in the interior of China since the Revolution of 1911, while no Chinese but brigands, soldiers, or the poorest of coolies can travel on the roads of Northern Shensi without great danger to property and life, a missionary or other foreigner can circulate where he pleases with comparatively little danger of being attacked. We had so far been accompanied by a 579 small mounted escort of a dozen men or so; for though the mountainous districts of Southern and Central Shensi through which we had passed harbour plenty of brigands, these are mostly local robbers who plunder isolated travellers

579 and levy blackmail on the villages. The north of Shensi on the other hand was at the time of our visit in the hands of organized troops of brigands of a semi-political character, robbers one day, rebels the next, and perhaps successful revolutionaries the next.

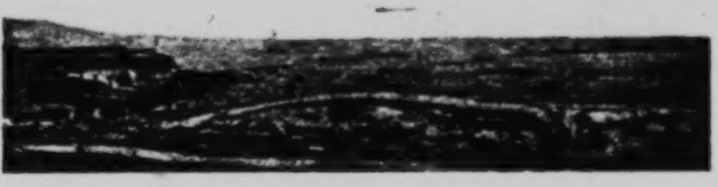
487 At Yao Chou we struck the main trail from Hsian Fu to Yenan, Suitê, Yülin, and the north of the province generally;
491 with the exception of the little known and seldom used track by which we returned it is the only trail connecting Central and Northern Shensi. As far as Yenan and Yench'ang it is passable for carts, having been constructed at considerable cost for the transport of the Japanese oil-drilling machinery to Yench'ang in 1906, and again repaired by the Americans during their oil-drilling venture eight years later. This road might at comparatively small cost be made passable for motor traffic, and had the American enterprise succeeded would doubtless long since have been made so. As it is, it nowadays leads into a depopulated, brigand-infested region where there is no trade and traffic, and is gradually reverting to the condition of an ordinary Chinese trail. But it is an example of the ease with which a comparatively good cart track can be constructed through mountainous country, where, without the stimulus of a foreign interest, the Chinese would for ever remain content with the usual villainous mule trail.

487 The first stage from Yao Chou is a short one, called 60 li,
133 to T'ungkuan Hsien, and lies up the valley to the N.E., which, except at one point about half-way where it contracts into
361 a gorge, is cultivated and bounded by low hills of loess. T'ungkuan is a little third class district city lying at the foot of the first of the mountain ranges which cross Northern Shensi from N.W. to S.E.

The next day's march is from T'ungkuan Hsien to Yichün Hsien, a distance of 80 li. The track runs up the valley to the north, the loess hills gradually becoming more rocky and less cultivated, for 25 li to the barrier hamlet of Chinso Kuan, where an old wall and fort guard the entrance to a gorge. Here the loess is left behind and scrub-covered mountains are entered through a winding gorge, which leads by an easy ascent after three hours' march to the hamlet of Liehch'uan, lying on the top of the range at a height of

PLATE XIV

361



CITY OF CH'UNHUA FROM THE N.E.

CITY OF CHUNGPU FROM THE E.

[FACING P. 61]

about 4700 feet. From the pass there is no immediate 487
descent, the track following along a winding ridge in the 133
grass and brush-covered hills for 25 li, and then descending
a few hundred feet to reach Yichün, a dilapidated little
city, built on the side of the ridge, the centre of a very poor [36]
third class district.

The range of mountains crossed on this day's march
forms the watershed between the Lo and Wei rivers, the
two principal streams draining Northern Shensi, and rises
well above the loess covering. Perhaps the soil of no region [311]
in the world has been worked by man to the same extent
as the loess of Central Shensi, where the Chinese have been
scratching, sowing, and reaping uninterruptedly for some
4000 years or more, and the landscape of those plains
appears tired and worn out. It is therefore a relief to get
out of the loess, with its alternate dust and mud, glaring
heat, insufficient and often brackish water, and treeless and
monotonous scenery, into these mountains with their clear
streams, grassy downs, and brush-covered slopes, haunted
by innumerable deer and pheasants. In all our travels we 136
found few spots more teeming with game than the hill sides
in the neighbourhood of Yichün, and being now in a country
where supplies were practically nil, we bagged quantities of
cock pheasants, in pursuit of which it was seldom necessary
to go more than a hundred yards from the road. We saw
plenty of deer, apparently roe, too, but as we could get
as many pheasants as we wanted, we did not trouble to
go after them.

This range also marks the dividing line at present 579
between the comparatively peaceful regions of Central
Shensi and the brigand infested north. Yichün had been 628
raided but recently, and was generally speaking in a most
dilapidated condition from this and previous raids. When
leaving the next morning we passed a crowd of the usual
emaciated dogs outside the North Gate feasting on the
remains of some decapitated brigands, an unpleasant sight at
six o'clock in the morning, but one which gave great pleasure
to most of the party. For a dead brigand cannot but be a
pleasant sight to a peaceful Chinese, and my companions
kept on repeating to themselves with real satisfaction *kou
ch'ih t'u fei* (dogs eating brigands), as being an entirely

ness" of this road, and certainly what with the ravages of 487
brigands and the natural infertility of the soil, the few
inhabitants were poor to the verge of starvation. Yenan
seems to be the centre of the most desolate area, by far the
poorest region I have traversed in China outside the actual
deserts.

Chungpu, a poor little third class district city half in 361
ruins, lies on the side of a hill, with a sacred grove of very 778
ancient trees behind it, which present a remarkable sight
in this treeless country. Near by is a small temple containing 769
the tomb of the Emperor Huang Ti, who reigned some 4000
years ago, which illustrates the great antiquity of these little
Shensi towns.

The next day's stage to Loch'uan Hsien is a trying 487
march through the loess. The track follows down the valley
to the east for 20 li, and then turning north climbs up through 133
a gully on to the plateau a few hundred feet above, across
which it runs for an hour's march to the hamlet of Antzu
T'ou, whence it drops into the valley of the Lo River. This
stream resembles the Ching Ho, a muddy torrent twenty
yards wide, and flows in a narrow valley some hundreds
of feet below the level of the loess plateau. It is crossed by [491]
a ferry at the hamlet of Chiaoho K'ou, and the path then
climbs steeply out of the valley again and runs across the
plateau in a N.E. direction for three hours' march to reach
the district city of Loch'uan. The latter is the usual little 361
third class Hsien city of Northern Shensi, but appeared to
be rather more prosperous than its neighbours and to show
less signs of the ravages of brigands. It lies on the loess
plateau, intersected as usual by colossal rifts, the heads of
some of which are so close to the city that they threaten
to engulf it in a few years time. These towns and villages
on the loess plateau are quite unapproachable except by
the existing roads owing to the rifts which open up all
around, and could be held by a few men against an army;
perhaps that is why Loch'uan appeared comparatively
immune from brigand raids.

From Loch'uan to Fu Chou is another exhausting march 487
in the loess of 75 li. The track runs N.E. across the plateau
for an hour's march until it is held up by a huge cañon 133
with the usual perpendicular walls. Climbing in and out of

487 this gorge it continues across the plateau, only to meet a
few li further on with another and still larger rift, at the
133 bottom of which there is a welcome stream and a hamlet
called Chiehtzu Ho, the boundary of Loch'uan district. The
crossing of a district boundary was always noticeable
throughout our journeys, because it entailed a welcome rest
and an exchange of civilities with a new magistrate. After
the usual five hundred foot climb out of this cañon the path
runs across the plateau northwards for an hour or so, and
then drops again into the valley of the Lo River, here containing
a considerably less volume of water than where
crossed on the preceding stage, the difference being due
to a large tributary from the west which joins it in between.
[311] Most of the terraced mountain sides in this neighbourhood
have gone out of cultivation, and from here north to Yenan
Fu the country becomes more and more desolate and
depopulated. Another 20 li up the winding valley brings
one to Fu Chou.

361 Fu Chou, now Fu Hsien, a second class district city,
is a fortress of great antiquity guarding this highway into
712 the heart of ancient China against the invasions of the hordes
of barbarians from the North. It fills up most of the valley
with its walls climbing up the hillside. Since the Mongol
ceased to threaten Fu Chou has entirely lost its former
importance and is now in a most miserable and decayed
condition. A walk on the wall shows the usual dilapidated
little city, but a stroll through the streets reveals the fact
that it is practically empty, *k'ung ch'eng*, as a Chinese
[166] remarked to me. The explanation of this lay in the fact
that it had been sacked four times by brigands during
the preceding year, and the inhabitants, having given up
residence there as hopeless, had emigrated to other parts or
634 provinces. We afterwards passed through many other cities
and villages in Northern Shensi in the same condition. The
625 post of magistrate in these districts is an exceedingly
unenviable one, and it appears to be difficult to get men
579 to take them up. If the brigands come, the *ching pei
tui* (police) are helpless, and the magistrate is lucky if
he can save his life by escaping into the mountains. The
official of one of these cities informed me that it was inadvisable
to arm the local police with modern rifles, as, the

PLATE XVI

133

LO RIVER IN A VALLEY IN THE LOESS PLATEAU NEAR FUCHOU

361
342

CAVE VILLAGE IN SEMI-DESERT COUNTRY NEAR YENAN

[FACING p. 65]

[625]
[634]

place having long been swept bare of all its valuables, there would be nothing to attract another raid provided there were 579 no modern arms and ammunition in the place. Silver, opium, rifles, and ammunition are what the brigands go for. The only thing that was not utterly decayed in Fu Chou 712 was a brand new *chai* (hill fort) on the top of the mountain behind the town, built by the magistrate and the few remaining inhabitants as a refuge against the next raid. In 534 the centre of the town is an old tower containing an ancient bronze bell of fine workmanship dating from the T'ang Dynasty, the only object of value which survives the periodical raids. From Fu Chou a track leads westwards to Ch'ingyang Fu in Kansu, one of the very few east to west trails in these parts.

From Fu Chou to Kanch'uan Hsien, a distance of 85 487 to 90 li, the trail runs up the valley of the Lo River through 133 poor-looking crops of maize, millet, hemp, and wheat. The loess hills on either side are mostly uncultivated and the 361 • whole region gives the impression of turning into desert. Several miserable hamlets are passed, consisting mostly of 342 caves or cave houses, the latter queer-looking square huts built of earth and stones with tunnel-like interiors. Scarcity of wood for roofing purposes is said to be the reason for constructing these remarkable artificial caves, but probably the people are so used to living in caves that they do not feel at home in anything else. A good cave in the loess is not to be despised as a dwelling, being rain proof, warm in winter and cool in summer. Owing to the vertical cleavage which is always going on in the loess these caves are constantly collapsing, but the owners seem to know by instinct when it is necessary to remove to a new abode. Kanch'uan is a smaller replica of Fu Chou, a ruined empty shell of a city.

Here the trail to Yenan, distant 85 li, leaves the Lo River 487 and follows up a side valley to the N.E. which leads after three to four hours' march by an easy ascent to the pass 133 (4100 feet) in the divide between the Lo Ho and the Yen Shui. This divide is entirely covered by loess, but curiously enough there is a complete change of scenery, and the ascent and descent is through jungle clad ravines and over grassy downs. These mountains are uncultivated and uninhabited,

CHAPTER VI

FROM YENAN AND YENCH'ANG THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS OF EASTERN SHENSI BACK TO HSIAN FU

Yenan—American attempt to exploit the oil deposits of Northern Shensi—Yench'ang—Yich'uan—Brigands and soldiers in Northern Shénsi—Han-ch'eng—How to travel in comfort—Hoyang—Ch'engch'eng—P'uch'eng—Fup'ing—Sanyuan—Baptist Mission—Cotton cultivation—Back in Hsian.

YENAN FU, now known as Fushih Hsien, a second class 361 ●
district city, is a large place in area as cities in Northern
Shensi go, but is nowadays extremely poor and dilapidated
as the result of the constant depredations of brigands in
the neighbourhood, most of the shops in the main street
being deserted. It is built in the narrow valley of the Yen
Shui, which it completely fills at this point, and like Fu
Chou it has guarded this passage into China against the
inroads of the Tartar hordes from the North for thousands
of years. On the hill side opposite are some remarkable 346
cave temples of great antiquity, one of them containing
innumerable (said to be ten thousand) little figures of
Buddha carved out of the sandstone rock. The neighbour- 243
hood appears desperately poor and the crops very backward,
the little wheat we saw being still green and barely in ear
during the first half of June, though the elevation is only
about 3000 feet. Northern Shensi and N.E. Kansu appear 132
to be drying up and turning into desert, perhaps owing to
the existence of a little-known range of mountains in Shansi,
just east of the Yellow River, which, rising ~~in places~~ to a
height of over 10,000 feet, must act as a barrier against the
moisture-laden winds from the coast. Coal and iron are 135
said to be abundant in the neighbourhood, but lack of means
of communication renders them useless except for local 316
consumption. Petroleum is also found in Northern Shensi,
and the attempts to exploit these oil deposits have been,
apart from rebellions, revolutions, and brigandage, the most
important events of recent years in this region.

In the past mineral oil used to leak out of the ground

[p. 67]

which, though very arduous and passing through desperately 487 poor mountainous country just inland from the Yellow 133 River, had apparently once been quite an important route. From Yenan to Hsian by this route *via* Yich'uan and Hanch'eng was a distance of about 1030 li, and took us more than two weeks' hard travelling.

From Yenan to Yench'ang is two days' march, 80 and 60 li respectively. The first stage lies down the valley of the Yen Shui between low hills of loess to the village of Kanku Yi. Ten li out one of the oil wells drilled by the Americans in 1916 is passed in the mouth of a small gorge; it has now been filled in. There are several cave villages on [361] the road, the largest being Yaotientzu 50 li out, where there are inns. Kanku Yi, as its name implies, is the ruin of an old fortified posting stage (*Yi*) such as are common on [185] the main roads of Kansu; here the main trail to the north of the province turns N.E. to Yench'uan and Suitê, while the Yench'ang track continues down the valley to the east.

Twenty-five li from Kanku Yi, at the hamlet of Heichia P'o, the river turns south, and the trail strikes up a ravine to the east to gain the top of the loess plateau some 500 feet above the valley, runs across the level upland for a few li, and then drops steeply into another ravine, which is followed for 20 li till it debouches again into the valley of the Yen Shui at Yench'ang Hsien.

Yench'ang lies in the narrow valley of the Yen Shui, 316 right on the river bank, in the mouth of a tributary ravine. The presence of the petroleum is very apparent from the smell which pervades the whole place, and as we were quartered and entertained on the premises of the oil concern and within a few yards of the principal well, the penetrating smell of mineral oil never seemed to leave us for a moment from the time of our arrival till that of our departure. The two wells lie just outside the city wall to the west; the principal one was pouring forth a steady stream of oil at the time of our visit and apparently never ceases doing so. The city itself is the usual little third class district town of 361 Northern Shensi, but it is less dilapidated than most of its neighbours and the walls are in better repair. This is owing to its not having been sacked by brigands during recent years, for which immunity from the prevailing evil credit is also, it seems, due to the beneficent oil.

487 the south, runs for two hours' march across the flat-topped hills, descending finally by precipitous zigzags to reach the 133 city of Yich'uan lying in the narrow valley of a stream flowing east to join the Yellow River. The country crossed on this march is again pure loess, very sparsely populated, and with innumerable grass-grown terraces which have gone out of cultivation and render evident the depopulation of the region.

• 361 Yich'uan Hsien, lying at the junction of two narrow valleys in the loess, is the capital of a second class district, and was evidently a comparatively large and prosperous city in the past. At the time of our visit it was practically empty, and lying in the heart of that wild and little frequented region which contains the chief haunts of the brigand bands of Northern Shensi, it is at the present time uninhabitable by any but the poorest classes. Northern Shensi, depopulated 669 by the Mahomedan rebellion fifty years ago, and now 162 probably undergoing a process of desiccation, is losing its few remaining inhabitants of the better class through the devastations of the brigands, many having moved across the Yellow River into Shansi, where conditions are much better. Recently a large band of brigands, perhaps finding that Northern Shensi was getting rather bare, also moved across the river; but prompt military measures were taken by the Shansi authorities and they were soon driven back to their original haunts with great loss. The question naturally arises, why should these brigands be left apparently unmolested by the authorities of their own province?

701 The answer is provided by the history of events in Shensi during the years since the revolution of 1911, which 579 is outlined in another chapter. The brigands of Northern Shensi are mostly ex-soldiers and Ko Lao Hui men, and are composed of the same material as the provincial troops, with whom they exchange rôles from time to time. It is therefore not possible to use the latter against them. Further, they constitute in a way the reserves of the provincial army, which are thus maintained without cost to the provincial [714] Government. The Shensi soldier usually owns his own Mauser and as much ammunition as he can carry wound round and round his body in a cloth bandolier, acquired in the course of some previous rebellion or brigand raid,

7

mountains to drain off the great floods which at that time 173
submerged the whole of North West China, thus bringing
into existence the modern Yellow River and the fertile
deposits of *Huang T'u* (the "yellow earth," which we call
loess); perhaps an earthquake gave rise to this tradition.

From this last pass, the track drops steeply into a gorge 487
which is followed for an hour's march to the S.E., and then,
crossing the spur which encloses the gorge on the south, 133
drops down into the loess plains on the right bank of the
Yellow River. From this point to Hanch'eng Hsien, a
distance of 40 li, the trail runs across an undulating plain,
which is not really a plain but the usual loess plateau, here
of moderate thickness, sloping down from the mountains to
the Yellow River, the latter flowing five to ten li away on
one's left. This plain between the foot hills and the river [361]
is one of the most fertile and densely populated regions
in the province, and is thickly dotted with farms, villages,
temples, tombs, and pagodas. It is always so in North
China, densely peopled fertile plains and barren empty
mountains side by side. The largest of the many villages
passed is Hsichuang, where there is a likin station to catch
the trade coming down from the North by the route we
had traversed; but its receipts must be small nowadays, for
not only not on this road, but at no time during our tour of
Northern Shensi, did we meet a single load of merchandize
or a single traveller of the better class, so utterly has all
trade and traffic in that region been destroyed by the
brigands. Finally there is a short steep descent to reach
the city of Hanch'eng, which lies surrounded by fields of
indigo in a basin in the loess plateau formed by the valley
of a stream flowing S.E.

Hanch'eng, a second class district city, is a large and 361
wealthy town, at least it appeared to us to be so, coming
from the poverty-stricken North. The district is one of the
most fertile in the province, and is noted for its wheat,
cotton, hemp, and indigo. The irrigated fields round the 241
city produce three crops in one summer, maize being sown
after a crop of wheat has been harvested, and indigo being
then transplanted in early June into the same field, the
indigo and the maize growing up together.

The most direct road from Hanch'eng to Hsian lies 487
133

487 through the cities of T'ungchou Fu and Weinan Hsien
across the plains along the Yellow River, but we followed a
133 slightly longer route further north across the loess uplands
via Hoyang, Ch'engch'eng, P'uch'eng, Fup'ing, and Sanyuan,
a week's journey by a good and mostly level trail.
The season of the year was now late June and the rains had
not yet broken, so we expected a scorching hot journey
across these plains; but fortunately we struck the season of
high winds which blow for a few days before the rains break,
and had quite a pleasant journey until the last day or two,
when we were overtaken by the opening downpours of the
rainy season and had a hard struggle to get across the waterlogged
plain of the Wei River.

From Hanch'eng Hsien to Hoyang Hsien is a long march
[491] called 95 li. The road, now a good cart track, leaves
Hanch'eng by the South Gate, and crossing a fine stone
bridge runs down the valley through indigo fields for 20 li,
where it debouches on to the Yellow River at the township
of Chihch'uan Chen, a prosperous little city with an
important likin station tapping the trade with Shansi. This
[361] place, like many other non-official townships we passed on
the road to Hsian, is larger and wealthier than any district
city we saw in Northern Shensi. At Chihch'uan the road
leaves the Yellow River and climbs up on to the loess
plateau some hundreds of feet above, across which it runs
388] south-west and west, past the townships of Pailiang Chen
(in Hoyang district) and T'ungchia Chuang, a centre of the
vegetable oil industry, and many smaller villages, for the rest
of the way to Hoyang. This plateau is just like all the other
loess uplands, an undulating wheat prairie intersected by rifts
and valleys; and the passage of two of these cañons hundreds
of feet deep makes the march a long and arduous one.

[361] Hoyang is a fairly large city, the centre of a first class
district; but it is a poor-looking place inside, like most of
these purely agricultural prairie towns, and is not to be
compared with Hanch'eng, which probably does a good deal
of trade with prosperous Shansi. It lies in a slight depression
of the rolling loess uplands, now covered with short wheat
stubble. Supplies of all kinds are abundant on this road,
but game is scarce; though an occasional pheasant was to be
seen in the bare fields.

2: Teichman G-5 (1919) 1921 AF13 Northwest China AF13

From Hoyang to Ch'engch'eng, a short march of 45 li, 487
the trail runs west across the same undulating plains, 133
traversing two deep cañons *en route*. Ch'engch'eng, a [634]
second class district city, is a replica of Hoyang.

The next stage to P'uch'eng is a very long march,
called 105 li, probably over 30 miles, for the li are long on
these prairies. The trail runs south across the plain past 361
numerous hamlets, descending gradually, for three to four
hours' march, and then drops by easy gradients in the loess
terraces to the walled township of Yungfeng Chen, 50 li
from Ch'engch'eng, in the valley of the Lo River. These
little walled towns often have the characters for their names
inscribed over the gateway, like stations on a railway, a
custom which is most useful to the traveller, and which I
have not noticed elsewhere.

Five li west of Yungfeng the Lo River, at low water a 487
few feet deep and fifteen yards wide, and of the consistency [491]
of liquid mud, is crossed by a ferry. The Lo here flows
from north to south; on the right bank rises a loess bluff 133
a few hundred feet high, and on the left the open valley
some miles wide stretches up by easy slopes and low terraces
to the level of the plateau. From the ferry the trail ascends
the bluff constituting the edge of the tableland, and then
runs west across the usual undulating wheat prairies, dotted
with walled farms and villages, for the rest of the way to 361
P'uch'eng.

P'uch'eng lies in the open plain backed by low
mountains about ten miles to the north. It is a large and
important place, a first class district city and the centre of
a great wheat-growing region. Many prominent men in
Shensi have their homes in the district, which therefore, in
these days of home rule, exercises considerable influence in
the province. These large first class districts in the loess of
Central Shensi, such as P'uch'eng, Lint'ung, Weinan, and
Fup'ing, the very heart of ancient China, have always been
proverbial for their agricultural wealth, and to this day the
provincial Government subsists largely off their land tax [651]
revenues.

From P'uch'eng to Fup'ing, another long march of 95 487
li, the trail continues west across the same undulating
prairies past many villages including the township of 133

487 Hsingshih Chen, a busy place where much of the commerce
133 of P'uch'eng district is carried on. Fup'ing, another important first class district city, lies in a depression in the loess plain caused by the shallow valley of a stream which provides irrigated lands of the richest kind. We chanced to be travelling this trail at a time when political affairs were in a more than usually chaotic state and the authority of the officials more than usually relaxed, and we had been strongly advised not to follow this route owing to the alleged large and turbulent populations of P'uch'eng and Fup'ing, who are said to be noted for their independence and love of managing their own affairs (*P'u Fu jen to, pei hsing pu an*, as one member of our party kept repeating); but, as almost everywhere else on our travels, we found the people perfectly friendly.

From Fup'ing to Sanyuan should be an easy march of 60 li; but the rains had now suddenly broken and it was an arduous day ploughing through the loess mud, which has a peculiar slimy character of its own, rendering progress whether on foot or on horseback dreadfully slow. The trail runs S.W. for a few li across low-lying land, apparently the valley of the Yao Chou River, which was largely under
[248] cotton, and then continues for 20 li across a wheat-growing plateau to the boundary of the two districts. Here there is a steep drop through a loess cutting into a level plain across which the track runs for the rest of the way to Sanyuan.

361 Sanyuan, the centre of a second class district, is one of the largest and most important cities in the province, though
438 this is not saying much. Commercially it is an annex to Hsian Fu, much of the commerce which really belongs to the latter being transacted here to avoid the official exactions of the provincial capital. For the same reason most of the trade to and from Kansu passes through Sanyuan. During recent years it has played an important part in the various rebellions and other political events which have so disturbed the province, and its trade has therefore been for the moment destroyed. The city lies on a level loess plain, and is bisected by a stream flowing in a deep rift, which is spanned by a fine stone bridge; the southern portion contains the shops and life of the place, the northern being mostly empty. Cart roads radiate in all directions across the plain.

paved most of the way and comparatively good in Szechuan, 487 but very rough and rocky through the mountains of Shensi. 491 Lying most of the way through Southern Shensi and Szechuan, where paved paths and flights of irregular stone steps are the rule, it is unsuitable for ponies, and it is advisable to take a chair, at any rate from the Han valley onwards. We started with ponies, having used them on all our journeys through the North West, but were compelled to take to chairs when we got into Szechuan, as the steps and paving stones knocked our ponies' feet to pieces. Walking and chairing is a pleasant enough method of travel, but very slow, the rate of progress in the mountains being only about eight li per hour, which makes the stages long.

The Belgians have secured a concession for the construction of a trunk railway from Tatung in Northern Shansi to Chengtu in Szechuan. It is a peculiar line to have chosen and one which will involve considerable engineering difficulties in Shensi and Szechuan. In nine cases out of ten the railway surveyor is unable to find a better trace for a line than that followed by an ancient highway of commerce, but if this railway is to follow the main trail between Hsian and Chengtu, its constructors are going to have a difficult job. The traveller by this road can therefore beguile the monotony of the journey by speculating as to the feasibility or otherwise of constructing a railway along it; it will certainly not be easy to find a less difficult route.

We left Hsian Fu on the 29th of June in a downpour of rain and floundered through the mud across the plain to [361] reach Hsienyang Hsien, fortunately only 50 li away. This city, a poor-looking place in appearance though the centre of a first class district, is built along the northern bank of [491] the Wei River, which is crossed by a cart ferry. It has some importance as being more or less the head of navigation on the Wei River, and as lying at the point where the great highway from Hsian, T'ungkuan, Peking, and the coast bifurcates, one branch continuing N.W. to Kansu and Turkestan, and the other turning W. and S.W. to Szechuan and Tibet. One cannot but speculate on the innumerable 000 travellers who have passed through its miserable little main street, knee-deep in dust or mud, bound on their weary way to the outposts of Chinese rule in the deserts of

000 Turkestan or Tibet, at any time during the past few
175 hundred years. Hsienyang is also famous as one of the old
capitals of China, having been the seat of no less a person
than the Emperor who designed the Great Wall, and who,
being annoyed by the supercilious conservatism of the
Chinese scholars of those days, buried several hundreds of
them alive, and burnt all their books; for which act his
name is execrated by the scholars of today.

487 Starting out from Hsienyang we left the high road to
Kansu, which we had followed two years previously, on
the right hand, and continued across the level plain to
Hsingp'ing Hsien, another short march of 50 li. This is a
second class district city lying on a wheat and cotton-growing
plain sloping from the north down towards the Wei
River.

The next stage to Wukung Hsien is a distance of 90 li,
764 still across the plain. Thirty li out, just beyond the village of
Mawei, the local magistrate who was accompanying us
175 suddenly dragged us off the road to visit a dilapidated little
temple in the fields, which turned out to be the tomb of a
notorious Imperial concubine known to every educated
Chinese as Yang Kuei-fei. She was strangled here by her
consort, the Emperor, to satisfy his troops in about 170 A.D.;
I forget the details of the story, which every Chinese knows.
There was nothing to be seen inside the temple except
the usual ancient individual busy taking rubbings of inscriptions.
Central Shensi is full of these objects of historical
interest, dating back sometimes two or three thousand
489 years. Wukung district is entered beyond the walled village
133 of Tungfufeng, which lies half-way, and the plain now begins
to rise imperceptibly and becomes the usual undulating loess
361 plateau; so that there is a sudden drop to reach the city of
Wukung Hsien lying in a valley a hundred feet or so below
the level of the loess. Three streams, from near Fenghsiang,
Linyu, and Yungshou, unite here to form a pea-soupy river
flowing south to join the Wei. Wukung, a second-class
district city, is quite a prosperous little place with busy
streets and well-stocked shops.

133 From Wukung the road climbs out of the valley and
runs across the loess uplands to the west. All along this
487 road the traveller is accompanied on his left hand by the

Ch'inling Shan, rising like a wall out of the plain to the 133 south of the Wei River, and affording fine views of its 487 culminating point the T'aipai Shan, snow-clad till midsummer (12,500 feet). The walled village of Hsinglin Chen is passed half-way out, and 15 li further on the valley of a stream from the north is crossed. Finally there is a drop to reach Fufeng Hsien, 60 li from Wukung, and a replica of the latter, lying in precisely the same sort of hollow below the level of the loess at the junction of two valleys from the north and west.

From Fufeng Hsien to Ch'ishan Hsien is another easy march of 60 li across the uplands, crossing two shallow ravines *en route*, the loess here not being of sufficient thickness to be fissured by the deep rifts and cañons found further north. Ch'ishan lies close under the mountains of the same name, with the loess plain sloping down to the Wei River to the south. The main road here continues west to Fenghsiang, but travellers bound for Szechuan like ourselves, and having no particular concern with the latter place, usually proceed direct to Paochi on the Wei River, a distance of 110 li, which can be covered in a long day's march. Ch'ishan, a second class district city, much resembles [361] Wukung and Fufeng, and seems fairly prosperous for a city of Central Shensi.

The road now runs west and south-west across the loess uplands for about 50 li, and then descends by easy gradients for another 25 li to reach Titien, a village of inns on the Wei [485] River, just beyond the confluence of the latter with the Ch'ien Shui from Ch'ienyang and Lungchou, the passage of which in a flooded state caused us some trouble. On this stretch of road we crossed our previous route from Mei Hsien to Fenghsiang Fu, thus affording an opportunity of checking the route survey, the results of which were not particularly encouraging; but as my instruments consisted of nothing more serious than a prismatic compass, with which I kept up a route survey throughout our journeys, this was perhaps not surprising. From Titien to Paochi the road runs west between the Wei River on the left hand and a high loess bluff on the right. The actual valley plain of the Wei is here quite narrow, as the land on the further bank rises almost immediately to the grim-looking barrier of the

133 Ch'inling Shan; above the loess bluff on the right hand,
487 however, the undulating uplands stretch northwards to
beyond Fenghsiang Fu till they meet the Ch'ishan range; west of Paochi these latter mountains converge on to the Ch'inling Shan, and bring the loess plains of the Wei basin altogether to an end, in much the same way as the cigar-shaped Hanchung plain ends beyond Mien Hsien.

[361] Paochi, a first class district city, lies on rising ground
behind the Wei River with its northern wall climbing the
[348] loess bluff. It is quite a big place and evidently handles a
considerable trade with Szechuan and Kansu. The inhabitants have the reputation of being turbulent and the
[575] Ko Lao Hui is very strong in the neighbourhood.

The western districts of Central Shensi through which
231 we had been passing are the breeding grounds for the mules
for which Shensi is famous, and which are exported in considerable quantities to the eastern provinces. At the time of our passage the wheat harvest was just over and the fields were being ploughed for the next crop. The endless plains of loess were everywhere dotted with ploughing teams consisting of mules and pony mares, the latter in almost every instance being followed by a mule foal. These Shensi and Kansu mules are the best in China, probably in the world. Fine upstanding animals, they carry loads of over 200 Chinese pounds (say 300 English pounds), travelling stages of 20 miles or more per day for weeks and months on end; the Szechuan and Yunnan mules, though good animals too, carry less than half as much. The secret of mule management in Shensi and Kansu is the feeding, and they are given an enormous amount of grain, which they spend most of the night in eating; a midday feed is not considered necessary, or even advisable, except on a very long march. The jack donkeys by which these fine mules are bred are large upstanding animals, the size of a pony, and very different from the ordinary pack-carrying donkey of North China.

133 From Paochi to Feng Hsien is a distance of 210 li and
487 includes the passage of the Ch'inling Shan. There are
[485] numerous inns *en route*, so that it can be divided into two,
three, or more stages as the traveller prefers. Leaving Paochi the Wei River, at high water several hundred yards

481 Han valley like the main road does. The trail runs S.W. down this valley through fields of wheat and maize past 133 several villages, such as Huangniu P'u, Hunghua P'u, and Ts'aoliang Yi, in any of which a halt can be made. The Tung Ho is here, in summer, already a fair-sized mountain torrent, only just fordable, and is joined by several tributary torrents from the wooded mountains on either side. Between Ts'aoliang Yi and Feng Hsien, a distance of 70 li, the river runs mostly through winding gorges, with the path, a good mule-trail, ledged in the cliff over the water.

● [361] Feng Hsien, a third class district city, consists of one long street with a certain amount of life in it owing to the traffic on the high road. It lies hidden by poplars in a [563] pretty cultivated valley. The confines of Kansu are not far off and there seem to be a good many Kansu Mahomedans in the district. There is plenty of loess in the Tung valley round Feng Hsien, though it is on the southern side of the Ch'inling watershed. There is not, so far as I know, any loess in the Han basin, but it may be noticed in the valleys of the headwater streams of the Chialing Chiang both here and above Li Hsien in Kansu, and doubtless in other places too. The presence of this loess south of the watershed range, which further east forms a barrier to and is the southern limit of this formation, seems to require a good deal of explaining; if the loess was deposited by water the fact that the relative height of the watershed above the ground north of it is so much lower in the west than in the east, may perhaps account for it.

484 We met a good deal of traffic on this road, in contrast to the empty trails of Northern Shensi, consisting of strings of coolies and pack-mules carrying tea, umbrellas, iron, etc., from Szechuan and the Han valley to Hsian and the towns of the Wei basin; when we got into Szechuan the contrast was still more marked, and the traffic was practically an endless procession of carrying coolies going both ways; and this in spite of the fact that Northern Szechuan abounds in brigands too, but apparently of a less formidable character than those of Northern Shensi.

487 At Feng Hsien the trail leaves the Tung River, which flows S.W. into Kansu, and turns up the mountain side to 133 the south, reaching the pass, the Feng Ling (6300 feet) after

487 133 a railway following the main road (which could avoid the more formidable Feng Ling by a détour down the Tung valley and up the tributary to Liufeng Kuan) would presumably require a long tunnel, and would meet with many more difficulties following down the gorge to Liupa [346] and beyond. Some five li below the pass lies the Changliang Miao, beautifully situated at the junction of two wooded ravines, where we passed the night. This is one of the finest temples in China, built, I believe, in the Han Dynasty, and is well known amongst the Chinese; one would have liked to remain there a week.

361 From Changliang Miao (also known as Miao T'aitzu) the path runs down a winding gorge for the rest of the way to Liupa, a distance of 40 li. The latter, formerly a T'ing, and now a third class Hsien, is a picturesque little place, almost filling a narrow valley hidden away on the southern slopes of the Ch'inling Shan, its situation exactly resembling that of Huayang further east on the road to Fop'ing. The city is practically empty, the life of the place being concentrated in a suburb outside the south-east wall.

487 133 From Liupa to Paoch'eng in the Han valley plain is a distance of about 180 li, which can be covered in two long marches, the trail running all the way down a winding gorge, occasionally cutting off corners by crossing low spurs. The going is most of the way very rough and rocky. Some three hours' march below Liupa the stream joins another much larger one flowing down from the southern slopes of T'aipai Shan, called the Pao Shui; up this stream lies a very rough trail to Mei Hsien in the Wei valley, crossing a shoulder of T'aipai Shan by a high pass. Several villages living on the traffic of this great highway are passed in the gorge, T'iehfotien, Matao Yi (the half-way stage), Erhshihli P'u, and Ch'ingch'iao Yi, in any of which a halt can be made. As one approaches the plain, the gorge, instead of opening out, becomes narrower, the cliffs more precipitous, and the track more rocky; and just when the weary traveller is beginning to look forward to the end of the stage, the gorge becomes impassable, and the path ascends for several hundreds of feet by flights of irregular stone steps, winds round the top of a spur, the Chit'ou Kuan, and drops straight down on to Paoch'eng Hsien, lying on the edge of the Han valley plain.

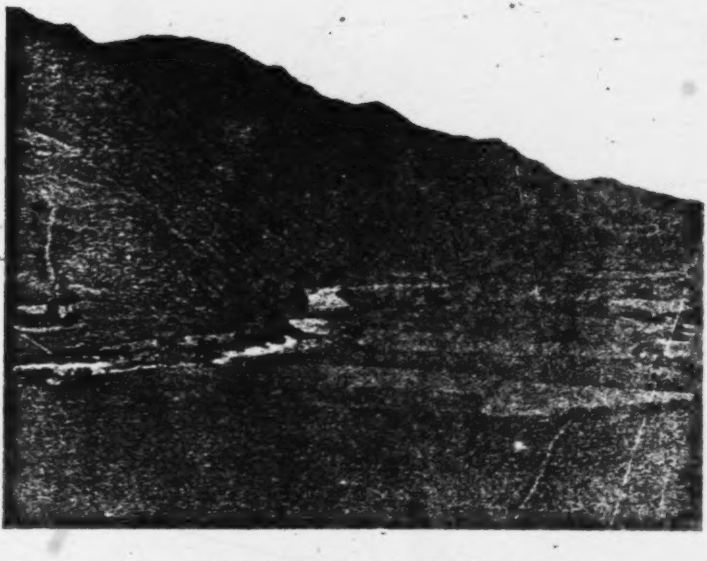
Paoch'eng, a second class district city, is the usual little Han valley town with much more life than the northern cities. It is memorable to us because it was there that telegrams were received reporting that General Chang Hsün had abolished the Republic by replacing the child Emperor, Hsuan T'ung, on the throne. One's first thought was that if China survived this supreme act of folly she would be lucky; and yet the next news we received of the situation a few days later was that it was all over, and the country again a Republic. Curiously enough it was the Northern Generals who squashed the incident so promptly and not the regular republicans. Discussing the matter with Chinese later on, one heard the opinion expressed in some quarters that the movement was not so mad as it seemed and that its prompt collapse was due to jealousy amongst the Northern military leaders; for, it was suggested, the Republic, though excellent in theory, is a hopeless proposition today and has proved itself unworkable. Others, on the other hand, maintained that the Republic has come to stay, and that the confusion and troubles of the past six years since the revolution are only its birth throes; in support of which theory the state of England during the years subsequent to the revolution against Charles the First may be adduced, which much resembles the condition of China today. In any case the believers in a constitutional monarchy have, it seems, got to look elsewhere for an Emperor than amongst the members of the Imperial Manchu family, against whom popular feeling is far too strong, and therein lies the great difficulty. It was a coincidence that we received the news of the restoration of the Manchu Emperor while we were in a distant part of Shensi, while the first intelligence regarding Yuan Shih-k'ai's ill-advised monarchical scheme of two years before reached us in the wilds of Kansu. In both cases it seemed that a catastrophe of the first magnitude was impending for the country, and in both cases things soon settled down after a certain amount of desultory fighting between the opposing parties. China is the land of compromise and it is perhaps this inability to settle any issue decisively one way or the other which has been the cause of the internal disturbances of the past six years. So far, whatever the row has been, the power has remained in the

PLATE XXI

361

CITY OF LIUPA T'ING, S.W. SHENSI

133



VALLEY IN S.W. SHENSI NEAR SZECHUAN BORDER

[FACING P. 96]

many years in various parts of Shensi, his local knowledge and experience were of the greatest assistance, while his talents ranged from shooting mountain goat in the Ch'inling Shan to the writing of Chinese poetry. 133 487

Leaving Chaoch'ang Pa a spur is crossed to avoid a bend in the stream, and the path then runs down the open valley, good going at last after days of rocky scrambles, for 40 li to the village of Shenhsuan Yi, another old posting station and the head-quarters of a deputy magistrate under Kuangyuan. A little further on down the valley a curious natural phenomenon occurs, the valley coming suddenly to an end, and the stream flowing under a mountain spur through a tunnel in the limestone, to reappear in a deep gorge half a mile further on. The path ascends this spur by flights of stone steps, and then, crossing to the other side of the valley, runs along the mountain side several hundreds of feet above the gorge of the stream for the rest of the way to Ch'aot'ien Chen, a large village lying on the banks of the Chialing Chiang. The latter flows swiftly in a deep gorge in the mountains; and on the practicability of this gorge for railway construction appears to depend the possibility of finding a comparatively easy route for a railway into Szechuan from the Wei valley; for it is by this gorge that the Chialing Chiang pierces all those intricate ranges on the borders of Shensi, Kansu, and Szechuan, containing the head-waters of the Han, which are connected with the Ch'inling Shan in such a manner as to render their passage by a railway elsewhere extremely difficult.

From Ch'aot'ien to Kuangyuan, a distance of 90 li, the path is ledged in one of the cliffs of the gorges of the Chialing Chiang; but it is possible to do this stage by water, and as the magistrate had kindly prepared some boats, we were only too glad at this stage of our long journey to avail ourselves of so restful a method of travel. The river was high and the current very rapid, so that we covered the distance in less than four hours, instead of the nine or ten it would have taken us by road.

Kuangyuan, a second class district city, lies in a small plain formed by the junction of a tributary with the Chialing Chiang. It is considered an important place owing to its position at the point where the big road from the north 133 487 361

[361] debouches into Szechuan and where another road emerges
487 from Kansu *via* P'ik'ou. Being a mountainous border
district it is full of brigands, who do not, however, seem so
133 formidable or so destructive to trade as their colleagues in
Northern Shensi; at any rate much traffic continues on the
big road.

We were now at the end of July, and as we emerged
from the higher mountains of Shensi into Szechuan the
[136] heat became daily more terrific. Mosquitoes too, which are
not noticeable in Kansu at all owing to the elevation, and
which only begin to be bad in Shensi towards the autumn,
became daily more voracious.

From Kuangyuan to Chaohua is a short march of 55 li.
down the left bank of the Chialing Chiang, which here
winds a good deal between more open mountain slopes. The
[491] river is crossed by a ferry to reach Chaohua, a small third
class district city, built on a point of land at the confluence
of the Chialing Chiang and a large tributary called the Pai
Ho from Kansu. These rivers have cut deep narrow valleys
in the precipitous mountains, which seem to run in all
directions.

Leaving Chaohua the road climbs to the top of a ridge
between the two rivers and continues along the summit in
a westerly direction for 40 li with finally a descent to the
village of Tashumu, whence it ascends another ridge
leading S.W. The trail is here a good paved path, ascending
and descending where necessary by flights of stone steps,
and the march along the summits of the ridges affords a
series of fine views over the surrounding mountains. Seventy
li from Chaohua the path drops steeply into the gorge of a
stream flowing north, up which it continues for another
hour, passing through a gate in a remarkable defile under
steep precipices of conglomerate rock, to reach the large
[361] village of Chienmen Kuan, the seat of a deputy magistrate
under Chien Chou.

On the next day's march the path follows up the valley for a short distance, and then climbs again on to a ridge which leads in a south-westerly direction. The paved path is much of the way bordered by venerable trees hundreds of years old, whose welcome shade accompanies one at intervals right through these mountains for several days'

487 133 reach the large village of Wulien Yi, the end of the stage, lying at the junction of two valleys. From Wulien Yi there is a gradual ascent again until the top of another ridge is reached, along which the road winds, past the half-way village of Shangting P'u, and a fine temple in a grove of trees called Ta Miao, until it descends by a long easy gradient to Tzutung Hsien, lying in a rather more open valley sloping S.W. The hills, which grow steadily less formidable as one proceeds south on this road, are now quite low, and the mountains to the N.W. are almost out of sight.

The red basin of Szechuan appears to be an old plateau of red sandstone worn down by the action of water into a maze of hills and valleys in the same way as the loess. This formation is, however, by no means confined to Szechuan, for a vast extent of country, stretching all the way from Honan through Southern Shensi and Kansu to Hsining and the Kokonor, is composed of the same red sandstone, which in the west everywhere forms the southern limit to the loess.

At Tzutung we encountered the old joke of the North Gate closed to keep the rain out and had considerable difficulty in apprising the magistrate of our arrival and effecting an entrance.

Crossing the river outside Tzutung by a fine stone bridge, over which three motor cars might have been driven abreast, though the paved road leading to and from it is only a couple of feet wide, the trail winds westwards through the cultivated red hills to the township of Weich'eng, the end of the stage of 60 li; and on the following day continues through the same country, winding through the hills and following along undulating ridges for 65 li, to reach Mien Chou, now called Mienyang Hsien, a large and crowded first-class district city on the Fu River.

487 133 361 We were now practically out of the mountains and not far from the northern end of the Chengtu plain. From Mien Chou the road runs through low hills for 90 li to reach Lochiang Hsien, whence it descends to Têyang Hsien on the plain, and continues through Han Chou and Hsintu Hsien to Chengtu. These district cities, Lochiang, Têyang, Han Chou, and Hsintu are all rich and populous centres, the like of which are not to be found in the whole of Shensi

and Kansu, situated short marches of 50 li one from the other. The Chengtu plain, notoriously one of the most fertile and thickly populated regions in the world, was one vast rice field, the grain nearly ripe, and promising, as usual, an enormous harvest. The most lucrative posts in the whole territorial administrative system of China are said to be the district magistracies on the Chengtu plain in Szechuan and in parts of Kuangtung, which are alleged to be more desirable from a monetary point of view than a Taoyinship. 487 133 361

Having left Chengtu five or six years previously shortly after it had been looted and partly burned during the troubles following on the Revolution of 1911, we now returned to find it once more in ruins, with street after street of wealthy shops and residences burnt down to heaps of rubble as the result of recent street-fighting between the Szechuanese and the Yunnan and Kueichou troops. Chengtu is incomparably the finest, richest, and most populous native city I know of in China, but it has known but little peace since the Revolution. Szechuan, the most fertile and thickly populated province in the Republic, lies in an unfortunate position between the North and the South, and has frequently been the bone of contention between the respective protagonists, the Peking Government and the Yunnanese, during the long drawn out and indecisive struggle of recent years. The Szechuanese themselves incline naturally towards the South and their fair province is in every respect a portion of the South-West; but the Yangtzu waterway and the overland road from Shensi render them very liable to invasion by the Northerners. Further the abundance of labour, rice, and all kinds of supplies make the province a most suitable battle ground, where both Yunnanese and Northerners can practise the latest Japanese manœuvres and test their newest foreign machine guns at a minimum cost to themselves. The Szechuanese are not a warlike race, and have not in the past played an important part in these civil wars; though recently signs have not been wanting that they propose to make a change in this respect in the future. As regards numbers they are in a position to swamp all the rest, while they also have the great advantage of a modern arsenal at Chengtu. 361 669 0-50

The Yunnanese have played a very large part in the

241 sort of veitch or lucerne is grown in the dry rice fields in the winter and ploughed into the ground at the time of the spring flooding as manure for the rice crop.

487 Ch'ien Chou lies near the north-western edge of the
Wei valley plains, and the road now ascends steadily over
133 loess hills for 90 li to Yungshou Hsien, lying just under the
summit of a loess clad range which here bars the way to the
west. The corn fields in the neighbourhood were full of
pheasants, though there was little or no cover apart from
the standing crops. The times being at the moment fairly
peaceful, we met a constant stream of the large carts which
ply on this road, one animal in the shafts and three in front,
mostly laden with the famous Lanchou water pipe tobacco,
which is exported from Kansu to all parts of China. Leaving
Yungshou, half an hour's walk uphill brings one to the top
of the ridge (4500 feet), whence there is a steep descent into
a stony valley leading down to a hamlet half-way to Pin
Chou. Here the road ascends again through the loess to a
plateau intersected by ravines, down one of which it descends
● [361] steeply to reach the valley of the Ching Ho and the district
city of Pin Chou, 70 li from Yungshou.

The Ching River is here a shallow mountain stream and
quite different to the torrent of liquid mud met with lower
down; apparently it assumes the latter character after its
confluence with the Huan Ho, which flows down from the
loess of N.E. Kansu. The road runs up the cultivated valley
of the Ching Ho, here about a mile wide and bounded by
cliffs of loess and sandstone dotted with caves. Twenty li out
[346] the temple of Tafo Ssu is passed on the left hand, where a
number of cave temples have been cut out of the rock in
one of which there is a huge figure of Buddha. Two hours'
march further on the road leaves the valley and climbs up
on to the loess plateau, across which it runs for the rest of
the way to Ch'angwu Hsien, a little city floating in a sea of
wheat, 80 li from Pin Chou.

From Ch'angwu Hsien to Ching Chou is a long day's march called 100 li, the Kansu border being crossed at a village 30 li out. The road runs across the plateau, winding to and fro to avoid the cracks and fissures in the loess, the beginnings of ravines, cañons and valleys. It is lined with trees much of the way, and often these are seen to lead to

634 favourably with many of the young magistrates in Shensi, promoted to their posts straight from the schools or the army through revolutionary influence, and without administrative experience of any kind.

443 P'ingliang, lying near the head of the Ching Ho valley at an altitude of over 4000 feet, is an important place, an agricultural market town in a wheat-growing region, and the administrative centre of Eastern Kansu. Being the seat of a Taoyin and a General, we had as usual a festive time during our short stay. The town, like most Kansu cities, is ● 361 half empty, but the east suburb, the Mahomedan quarter, is 563 busy and full of well-stocked shops. It was there that we first noticed the white caps of the Kansu Mahomedans, of whom we were to see so much during the next few months. The prosperity of the suburb compared to the city and their presence there were connected by the fact that until recently no Mahomedan was permitted to reside inside the walls of an official city in Kansu (one of the suppressive measures taken against them after the great rebellion); with the arrival of the republic, however, and its watchword of equality for the five races (Chinese, Mahomedans, Manchus, Tibetans, and Mongols), this disability was allowed to lapse. Frequent reference to the Mahomedans of the North West will be made in the following chapters, but the subject of Islam in China is an obscure and contentious one, and it should be noted that the statements here made are not the product of scientific enquiries, but merely the results of conversations with Chinese, mostly of the official classes, who, though sometimes Moslems themselves, were only acquainted with the superficial facts and popular traditions relating to the Mahomedans and their religion.

162 563 I estimate the Mahomedans of Kansu to constitute from a quarter to a third of the total population. They are freely scattered throughout the districts of the province as merchants, especially dealers in horses, but they are settled on the land more especially in two regions, in the South and the North respectively, roughly separated by the Great West Road. In the South they form a kind of Mahomedan wedge between the Chinese and the Tibetans of the Kokonor, centring round Hochou and Hsunhua on the Yellow River; in the North they extend from P'ingliang through Kuyuan,

and Haich'eng to Chinchi (Ningling)

and Ninghsia.

718 signals could be sent great distances in a very short space
of time.

From Hsikung Yi to Anting, another short stage of 60 li,
487 the road follows up the ravine for ten li, and then climbs a
133 long steep hill by zigzags. On reaching the summit there is
no immediate descent the other side, but the path winds
along a high ridge with extensive views over the loess
mountains all around, finally dropping steeply to Anting in
• [361] a valley running north-west. Anting Hsien (now known as
Tinghsi) is an important district city lying at the junction of three valleys, and, commanding several roads north, south, east and west, was formerly an important military centre. There is more water available here, and consequently the country is much more fertile and the people quite well off. Loess country in this rainless region is either a desert or a garden according to the amount of water available for irrigation, and from here on to Lanchou, though the hills become more and more sterile, the irrigated valleys are wonderfully green and fertile.

From Anting to Lanchou is a march of four short stages of about 60 li each. The road runs down the valley past several prosperous hamlets for 45 li to the village of Ts'ank'ou whence it strikes west up a side valley to the posting station of Ch'enk'ou Yi, the end of the stage. From here it ascends a gully for a few li and then climbs a steep loess hill to reach the summit of a ridge along which it winds for three to four hours' march, with finally a steep descent to the large market village of Kantsao Tien, lying amongst fertile irrigated fields at the junction of three valleys. To the south-west rises a high range of mountains, beyond which lie Titao and the T'ao River. From here on to Lanchou the irrigated valleys, bounded by desert hills, are highly productive, and the crops several weeks ahead of those in the barren region we had traversed since crossing the Liupan Shan.

From Kantsao Tien a good road runs down the cultivated
valley for 70 li to Chinchia Yai, a large village and likin
[361] station, and the end of the stage. The district city of Chin
Hsien lies just off the road, 25 li to the south. Leaving
Chinchia Yai the valley soon contracts to a stony ravine, and
after 20 li debouches suddenly on to the gorges of the Yellow
River, which here rolls its turgid waters between precipitous

granite walls. The path runs for a short distance along the 487
river, and then enters a belt of sand hills from which it
emerges on to the river again at the village of T'ungkuan 1·33
P'o, lying at the entrance to the gorges. From here to
Lanchou (20 li) the road is a broad highway up the open
cultivated valley of the Yellow River.

Lanchou Fu, now officially known by the name of the 361 ●
district, Kaolan Hsien, is by far the most attractive of the
provincial capitals of China I have visited. It is built along
the right bank of the Yellow River at a point where the hills
close in on the river, the valley expanding into small plains
to the east and west. The greyish yellow city walls and
towers blending with the yellow waters of the river and the
desolate yellow grey hills all around, the whole relieved by
the bright green of the irrigated fields in the valley, combine
to form an attractive picture which will long remain with
those on whom the deserts and mountains of the North West
exercise their mysterious charm. The modern iron bridge 491
across the Yellow River, constructed a few years ago by
foreign engineers, is rather an eyesore, but its great utility
more than makes up for its appearance. Across this bridge,
which at the time of our visit was in a very decayed state
as far as the woodwork was concerned, passes an almost
incessant stream of traffic, carts, ponies, mules, camels, and
sometimes yak, bound eastwards for China and westwards
for Turkestan. So far as I know there are only three
bridges across the Yellow River, this one, and the Peking-
Hankow and Tientsin-Pukou railway bridges in Honan and
Shantung; which is, however, a better record than the
Yangtzu can show, the latter having no bridges across its
course anywhere. The walls of Lanchou are well built and 361
kept in good repair, and the whole city has an air of compact
strength, comparative cleanliness, and prosperity. It was
never taken by the Mahomedans during the rebellions of
the past, and it was also one of the few provincial capitals
to escape being looted by soldiers or mob during the revolution
of 1911 and subsequent troubles, and its shops appear
rich and well stocked. Owing to its situation at the junction 438
of the Yellow River with the highway from China to
Turkestan, as well as numerous other roads leading in
various directions, it is by far the most important centre in

CHAPTER IX

FROM LANCHOU FU SOUTH TO CH'INCHOU AND THENCE WEST TO T'AOCHOU ON THE KOKONOR BORDER

Shani—Titao—Weiyuan—Kungch'ang—Ningyuan—Fuchiang—Ch'inchou—Schools, government and missionary—Li Hsien—Western end of Ch'inling Shan—Profusion of pheasants—Grass plateau—Modern maps of China—Min Chou—T'ao river valley—New T'aochou—Mahomedans on Kokonor border—Choni—Old T'aochou—Tibetan trade—The Min Shan—Mission work amongst Tibetans—Pneumonic plague.

WE finally left Lanchou on June 9 for Ch'inchou, Minchou, 487
and T'aochou. The road runs due south, ascending a 133
narrow stony valley, for 40 li to reach the village of Akan
Chen, picturesquely situated in a wooded gorge. Most of [316]
the coal consumed in Lanchou comes from this neighbourhood, and the manufacture of pottery seems to be quite a [323]
local industry. We passed the night here, though the village was hard put to it to accommodate our moderate-sized party. On the following day the road ascends through a wooded ravine where pheasants are numerous for some 15 li to the top of the pass, and then descends for three hours' march through a barren rocky gorge to the hamlet of Chungpu, which is an alternative halting-place to Akan for breaking the 120 li from Lanchou to Shani into two stages. From here the road threads its way through barren hills of sandy loess for about 35 li to Shani, a wretched walled village recently promoted to the rank of district city under the new name of T'aosha Hsien. It is suitably named for the surroundings are almost desert, which is characteristic of the T'ao valley from here down to its junction with the Yellow River, and form a curious contrast to the thickly wooded slopes round Akan Chen.

From Shani to Titao Chou is a march of 90 li up the 312
T'ao River valley, which is here about a mile broad and
converted by irrigation from a desert into a market garden. 361
Numerous villages are passed, the largest being Hsintientzu and Hsink'ai P'u, 30 and 50 li out. Titao Chou, now Titao

312 Hsien, surrounded by rich irrigated lands, is a city of some importance, occupying a strategic position between Lanchou Fu and the Mahomedan strongholds round Ho Chou. It [277] is also a centre of the water pipe tobacco industry and of [313] the trade in lumber, the latter rafted down the T'ao River from the forests of the Kokonor.

From Titao to Weiyuan Hsien is a distance of 110 li 437 across the watershed between the T'ao and Wei rivers, which can be divided into two marches by halting at the 133 hamlets of Yaotien or Ch'ingp'ing, where there are inns, 50 and 80 li out respectively. Leaving Titao the road runs up a shallow cultivated valley bounded by hills of red clay in an easterly and then a southerly direction for 80 li to the hamlet of Ch'ingp'ing, where the valley is a mere ravine. From here it ascends a grassy ridge which is followed for two hours' march to gain the watershed pass, and then drops steeply to Weiyuan Hsien. The railway from Hsian to Lanchou which, it is proposed, shall follow up the Wei valley, will here presumably require a tunnel through this watershed to reach the valley of the T'ao. Weiyuan is of some interest to the Chinese as lying on the headwaters of their historical river the Wei. We found it a small but well-kept city, rejoicing in a particularly progressive young [491] magistrate. The river is here quite small and easily fordable, and its valley though narrow is cultivated and has a prosperous appearance.

From Weiyuan to Kungch'ang is a march of 90 li by a good road down the valley, generally a mile or two wide, well cultivated, and bounded by bare hills. Numerous villages are passed, the largest being Shouyang Ch'eng, half way. Kungch'ang Fu, now known as Lunghsi Hsien, is a large city in extent, but having been destroyed during the Mahomedan rebellion is still half in ruins. Another march of 90 li, still down the valley, brings one to Ningyuan. Forty li out the hills close in on the valley which becomes barren [491] and stony. The Wei River is forded twice on this stage and also the Nan Ho, a large tributary from the south. The latter was in flood and gave us some trouble. Immediately after crossing the Nan Ho there is a steep ascent and descent over a ridge which blocks the valley at this point, followed by an hour's march down the open valley to Ningyuan.

Many villages are passed on this stage, the largest being 487
Ssushihli P'u and Chaochiakengtzu, 40 and 50 li out
respectively. Ningyuan (new name Wushan Hsien) is a /133
pleasant little city lying in the irrigated valley of the Wei
River producing heavy crops of corn and hemp.

From Ningyuan to Fuchiang is a long stage called 100 li. The road continues down the valley, crossing a loess ridge just before getting to the large market village of Lomen Chen, 30 li out. The valley on this stretch of the road is very fertile, thickly populated, and well timbered. Fuchiang is quite a wealthy town, and this part of Kansu is probably the richest in the province, with the exception perhaps of the Ninghsia plains. It used to be a centre for the opium trade, now more or less extinct. [274] The poppy was formerly cultivated extensively in all the irrigated areas in Kansu, and the product was considered the best native-grown opium in China and was in great demand in Peking, Tientsin, and North China generally.

At Fuchiang the road leaves the Wei valley and ascending a gorge in the loess hills, crosses a steep little pass and descends to the large village of Kuantzu Chen, 40 li out. From here it continues down this valley, that of a tributary of the Wei, passes through a stony gorge, and emerges at the village of Liushihli P'u, 60 li from Fuchiang, whence there is a good road through cultivated fields down the valley for the remaining 60 li to Ch'in Chou. [361] The latter, now known as T'ienshui Hsien, consists of no less than five cities built one alongside the other, and is one of the largest and most important towns in the province. A considerable trade is carried on with Shensi and Szechuan, the exports [438] consisting of the regular products of Kansu, such as wool, hides, deer's horns, furs, musk, rhubarb, mountain medicines, tobacco, and opium, and the imports of silk, tea, piece goods, etc. The Szechuanese element in the population is considerable, and the proximity of that province is in many ways noticeable. It is not a Mahomedan centre, but there [563] is a small community of Moslem merchants engaged as usual in the horse and cattle trade and in the export of hides to [438] Hankow. Two roads lead from here into Shensi, one *via* Hui Hsien to Hanchung, and the other *via* Ch'ingshui to Fenghsiang; two roads also lead into Szechuan, one *via*

due south for 15 li and then branches off up a side ravine 487
to the S.W., another road continuing south up the main
valley towards Hui Hsien. After an hour or two's march /133
up this ravine the trail ascends a low pass, crosses a small valley, and immediately rises again to cross another low pass, whence it descends to the village of Kaomo Chen in the valley
of a streamlet flowing from west to east. We were delayed [262]
in Kaomo Chen for half a day by our mule train following the wrong path, and its poverty was evidenced by the fact that we could get nothing but unleavened cakes of maize to eat, the most unpalatable form of nourishment I have ever had to put up with in China, though very often the only food of the people in mountainous country. From here the trail ascends by easy gradients to a pass in the Yangtzu-Yellow River divide, a climb of less than an hour over grassy slopes devoid of trees, and then descends steeply to a valley running south-west. The track follows down this stream for 20 li to the village of Lochia P'u, where it debouches into a broad and fertile valley, bounded by low cultivated hills of loess, the stream flowing from east to west. This stream is one of the headwaters of the Chialing Chiang, which flows through Szechuan to Chungking, and it is remarkable to find so much loess south of the divide. The latter formation may also be seen on the headwaters of the Shensi branch of the Chialing Chiang round Feng Hsien on the Hsian Chengtu road.

From Lochia P'u there is a remarkably good road down the open loess valley for two hours' march to the walled village of Yen Kuan, where there are said to be salt wells. The magistrate of Hsiho Hsien met us here, as we had entered his district; he said that a road branches off at this point to Hsiho and Chieh Chou and so to Szechuan. From Yen Kuan the road continues down the valley until within 20 li of Li Hsien, where it crosses a spur to avoid some
gorges, and the loess formation comes to an end. Li Hsien [361]
is a picturesque little city lying hidden away on the southern slopes of the Ch'inling Shan in a country of narrow fertile valleys, whose streams all go to form the headwaters of the Kansu branch of the Chialing Chiang. From here to Min Chou our route followed an unfrequented trail which penetrated the Ch'inling Shan in the most curious way,

487 It is suggested that the Chinese might with advantage borrow the services of some officers from the Survey of India and 133 proceed to the triangulation of the whole country. The results, at any rate in Kansu and parts of Shensi, would be surprising. Amongst many other interesting facts which would be brought to light are the actual heights of the snow-clad mountains on the western borders of Kansu and Szechuan, some of which probably equal or surpass all but the highest giants of the Himalayas.

● 361 Min Chou (now Min Hsien) is a small city with busy suburbs situated on the right bank of the T'ao River at 438 the point where the latter, flowing down from the Kokonor mountains in the west, makes a sharp right-angle turn to the north. The altitude is about 7500 feet. The T'ao River [241] valley, here nearly a mile wide in places, is very fertile, and produces wheat, barley, beans, hemp, etc. Like T'ao Chou and Hsiku, Min Chou is a centre for the Chinese trade with the Tibetan inhabitants of the Kokonor country 493 further west. A rough cart built entirely of wood with remarkably high wheels and drawn by the half-bred yak is used round Min Chou, on the roads to T'ao Chou, on the grasslands round the latter, and in other border parts of the province. I mention this cart because it is obviously very useful and because it is quite unusual to find wheeled traffic of any kind in such mountainous country in China; its introduction into the Tibetan inhabited plateau west of Tachienlu in Szechuan would revolutionise transport in that region.

487 Leaving Min Chou the road runs along the right bank of the T'ao River for ten li, and then crosses to the left bank [491] by a ferry, the bridge having been destroyed at the time of the White Wolf raid. The river is here in the summer 133 about 80 yards wide, six to eight feet deep, and very rapid. Navigation is confined to rafts of lumber down stream. From the ferry the path continues up the valley for three to four hours' march to the village of Hsitachai. The T'ao River valley is in this neighbourhood one of the most attractive regions in Kansu, or perhaps in China, being fertile and well cultivated, and bounded on the southern side by forest-clad mountains, the foothills of the great Min Shan. The river flows much of the way in a narrow

trough below the surrounding level of the valley. Just 187 beyond Hsitachai the path leaves the T'ao River, along 133 which another track runs direct to Choni, and turns up a side valley to the north to reach a semi-Tibetan hamlet called Shanch'a, 80 li from Min Chou, where we passed the night in the house of the headman. Pheasants were abundant in this picturesque and well-wooded valley.

At Shanch'a the path turns up a side ravine leading after an hour's march to an easy pass, whence there is a descent for another hour into a bare valley, followed by a rise over a second low pass, and a descent to New T'ao Chou in another bare open valley, a march of 40 li in all. New T'ao 361 Chou (now called Lintan Hsien) is the official town, as opposed to Old T'ao Chou, distant 60 li, the commercial town, and is an empty shell of a city of no importance. About half the few buildings inside the walls had been destroyed by the White Wolf rebels the year previously. We were accommodated in a temple which the magistrate had fitted up temporarily as his yamen. The city lies in a bare open valley some 20 li or so north of the T'ao River in a region of treeless hills of loess, red clay, and red sandstone. This somewhat dreary belt of bare red hills 563 intervenes practically all along this border between the loess of Kansu proper and the pine forests and grass lands of the Kokonor country, and corresponds roughly to a similar Mahomedan wedge between Chinese and Tibetans. The red hills round New T'ao Chou are cultivated and dotted with villages, mostly Mahomedan. The Moslems extend from here along the border to their real strongholds round Ho Chou and Hsünhua, and thence north of the Yellow River to beyond Hsining. We were travelling round the 132 two T'ao Chous during the season of summer thunderstorms (early July), and usually experienced several daily, some very severe and rather alarming in this elevated region. On one 788 occasion hurrying into a Mahomedan farmhouse for shelter we found the inhabitants at prayer as though in a mosque; 795 this custom of using private houses for prayer is, I was told, confined to the followers of the "New Sect," which is very extended and influential in Kansu. Our sudden intrusion 563 was not resented in the least, and on this, as on every other 609 occasion when I met Mahomedans in Kansu, we were

563 treated with every courtesy. The Mahomedans of Kansu
609 still consider themselves to a certain extent as foreigners
sojourning in a strange land, and greet travellers from the
west as fellow-wanderers.

133 From New T'ao Chou to Choni, a march of 30 li, the
track runs south-west over a low pass in the red clay hills,
487 crosses a valley trending south, ascends another low pass,
and descends through a grassy ravine to the T'ao River.
563 Choni, the residence of a T'ussu, or native chief, ruling
several Tibetan tribes in the neighbourhood, is a picturesque
● [361] little place, a walled village built round the chief's residence
[792] on the banks of the T'ao, and overlooked by a lamasery
containing some 500 monks. We were received by the
[576] usual cannon shots (an old-fashioned Chinese custom still
surviving in most parts of Kansu which is terrifying to
one's pony unless accustomed to it) and really sumptuously
lodged in the chief's residence. The Choni T'ussu is by
far the most important native chief in Kansu and exercises
jurisdiction over an extensive territory. Some of his tribes,
especially those living to the south of the Min Shan, are
turbulent and not easy to control. The chief is under the
authority of the Governor at Lanchou, but unlike his
colleagues in Szechuan west of Tachienlu, he retains his
power unimpaired over his Tibetans. On the east his
jurisdiction is bounded by Chinese territory; on the west
it fades away amongst the lawless nomads of the grass-
lands. His authority, like that of most native chiefs in
China, extends rather over tribes and families than fixed
territory, and its limits are therefore vague.

563 The T'ao River is here the dividing line between
Tibetans and Chinese (Mahomedans), the forest-clad
mountains to the south being inhabited by the former, and
red hills to the north by the latter. There is good big game
shooting to be had in these forests, wapiti, sheep, goral,
487 serow, bear, etc. The elevation of the valley seems to be
about 8000 feet at Choni.

133 Leaving Choni the road runs up the beautiful T'ao valley
for about ten li, and then turns north-west up a small ravine
leading to an easy pass. From here it runs along the top of the
mountain for a few li, descends into a valley, crosses another
low pass, and drops down to Old T'ao Chou, 45 li from Choni.

Old T'ao Chou lies in a valley about ten li north of the 361
T'ao River at an elevation of about 9000 feet in the same region of bare red hills with cultivated valleys as the New City. At the time of our visit its chief feature was the fact that the four walls enclosed nothing but a mass of ruins, the town having been completely burnt out by the White Wolf rebels the year before; we saw many a ruined city in Kansu in the course of our travels—indeed in that province ruins are the rule rather than the exception—but nothing so utterly and completely destroyed as Old T'ao Chou. Outside the city, however, there was a suburb which did not seem to have suffered much, and here we were well lodged in a large Tibetan inn. T'ao Chou is the Kansu 439
counterpart of Tachienlu and Sungp'an in Szechuan, a centre for the exchange of the products of China and Tibet, where barley-meal, piece goods, tea, tobacco, and Chinese wares such as saddlery, boots, guns, felt, etc., are exchanged for wool, skins, furs, gold dust, medicines, deer's horns, Tibetan incense, and other produce of the highlands, a lucrative trade here largely in the hands of the Mahomedans. There are, however, certain marked differences in the conditions ruling at T'ao Chou and Tachienlu. For instance in the latter place trade during recent years has been greatly interfered with by the hostilities which have been carried on intermittently between Chinese and Tibetans during the past few years, whereas at T'ao Chou the traffic has been uninterrupted; secondly at Tachienlu the lamas and native tribesmen have been completely cowed by the Chinese and are not allowed to carry arms, whereas at T'ao [563]
Chou the wild-looking nomads swagger about the streets armed to the teeth, and have so far only been bested by the Chinese in commercial transactions.

A road leads from T'ao Chou through the grass country 487
of the independent Golok to Jyekundo and Central Tibet. Though this route is little known, it is said to pass through 133
good grass country most of the way, and is perhaps the easiest road from China into Tibet. Another road leads south to Sungp'an in Szechuan, passing over the Min Shan by a peculiar looking square gap in this rocky barrier range, called the "Shih Men" (Stone Gate), but it is little used [illegible] traverses the territory of one of the most lawless tribes

Leaving T'ao Chou the trail runs north-west over a low 487
pass in the red clay hills, traverses a cultivated valley
trending south, and ascends by easy gradients to another 133
pass, whence there is a particularly fine view over the Min
Shan to the south of the T'ao River. Beyond this point
Chinese cease to be seen. From this pass the track descends
steeply to another stream flowing south and then continues
north-west up a flat shallow valley bounded by bare grassy
hills. In this valley and its neighbourhood there are several [364] ●
Tibetan villages, in one of which, about 50 li from T'ao
Chou, we passed the night; its name has escaped me, if I
ever heard it. These villages are under the control of the
Choni chief, and preparations had been made to receive us
in the headman's house. The Tibetans are usually considered
to live under the hardest and most filthy conditions, which
is certainly so in the case of these Amdowa where they are
nomads on the grass-lands. But the houses of the headmen 342
of the agricultural Tibetan villages, both here and elsewhere
where we rested in them, showed an astonishingly high
standard of comfort and were superior to any Chinese house
I have seen. These houses are solidly built of wood and
stone of two stories, and the rooms of the one in which
we were lodged here were spotlessly clean and panelled
with stained wood.

An hour's march beyond this village the trail emerged 487
from the valley after topping an easy pass, where marmots 133
were very abundant, sitting up in front of their holes and
dodging in as one approached them. This pass is here the
boundary of the real grass-lands, and apparently the border
of the Choni chief's territory in this direction. Beyond it 233
all cultivation ceases, there are no more houses, and one
enters a region of shallow valleys and low mountains
(elevation about 11,000 feet) dotted with large herds of yak,
sheep, and ponies grazing round the black rectangular tents
of the Tibetan nomads, here, as elsewhere, called Drokba.
These grassy steppes, always referred to by the Chinese 133
as *Ts'ao Ti*, bound China everywhere on the north and 563
west, and always one ascends to them through a region of
broken mountains, whether it be from Szechuan or Kansu
up to the highlands of the Tibetan plateau, or from Chihli
or Shansi up to the highlands of Mongolia; and always it

133 is the same land of nomads and lamas, whether Tibetan 563 or Mongol. In past centuries the Chinese were ever engaged, with varying success, in defending their fertile plains and valleys against the incursions of Tartar hordes from these tablelands; now the nomads are impotent outside their own territories, reduced in numbers and virility perhaps by the lama religion, and these vast empty spaces serve as buffers protecting China from the rest of Asia. Undoubtedly her wisest policy is to leave the scattered inhabitants to manage their own affairs as hitherto under her vague suzerainty.

133 The trail runs north-west across these grass-lands, 487 passing continually from one shallow valley to another; at first these valleys slope S.E. towards the T'ao River, but after 20 li or so they slope N.W. towards the Ho Chou [361] River. The pasturage is excellent and there are many nomad encampments; the latter are only to be approached with care, as they are guarded by huge Tibetan mastiffs, I should think easily the most formidable breed of dog in the world, and the nomads themselves are not friendly to strangers. Indeed the Amdo Tibetan of the Kokonor grass country is about the last kind of individual one would choose to meet alone on a dark night, and a wilder or more picturesque looking lot of ruffians it would be difficult to imagine. They always go heavily armed, and are robbers by nature. Once properly introduced to them, however, one can count on friendly treatment, and we had nothing to complain of in 792 this respect. After six or seven hour's march from the village where we had passed the night the trail descended from the plateau into an open and partly cultivated valley with the temples and barrack-like buildings of the monastery of Heitso Ssu at the end of it, a most striking sight in this land of tent-living nomads.

Heitso Ssu (the Chinese name) is a large and wealthy monastery, containing, we were told, some thousand lamas. It is quite a little town in itself, with, as is usually the case on this border, a small Chinese village or bazaar of one street, run mostly by Mahomedans, attached to it. It lies at the junction of two small valleys below the level of the [241] grass country, and the neighbouring slopes are well cultivated with barley and peas and dotted with Tibetan farms. We 609 were badly housed in a kind of inn in the Chinese bazaar,

valley, at first through cultivated fields and then through a 487
densely wooded gorge. This is a difficult march in the 133
summer, as the trail constantly crosses and recrosses the
stream, which is rapid, obstructed by boulders, and only
just fordable. Several of us got a wetting, but we were lucky
in keeping the pack-mules on their feet and our bedding
dry. The mountains in the neighbourhood are covered with
fine forest, but mostly on the slopes facing north only, a
peculiarity which may be noticed all along the Kokonor
border; I have observed the same thing in the forests of
Northern Shansi; whether it is that the sun is too hot on
the southern slopes, or that the northern slopes alone receive
sufficient moisture, I am unable to say. Four to five hours' [792]
march down this gorge, past several small lamaseries, brings
one to the junction of this stream with the Tahsia River, a
torrent flowing from Labrang to Ho Chou. The Labrang
road turns up this valley and runs for a few li through
cultivated fields to the small monastery of Shakou Ssu, [772]
which lies on the north side of the stream, with a Mahomedan
hamlet, Sasuma, opposite, where we passed the night in an
inn. There are pine forests all around, and the Tahsia River, [137]
though only a mountain torrent, is used for rafting the cut
timber down to the Yellow River and Lanchou. The timber [313]
is made up into narrow sections, fastened one behind the
other, and the jointed raft which results is navigated down
the rapids and through the rocks with extraordinary skill by
Mahomedan raftmen.

From Heitso to Labrang is a distance of some 120 li,
and Sasuma lies about half way, the track running for the
rest of the way up the valley of the Tahsia River. For the [491]
first 30 li the path is very bad and rocky, the valley being a
gorge hemmed in by wooded mountains; there is no more
fording to be done, however, as the river is spanned by good
cantilever bridges, this being a portion of the Labrang-Ho
Chou road, which is much used by the mule trains of
Mahomedan merchants. In this neighbourhood we saw [136]
some *ma chi*, the large and handsome silver pheasant
with red legs (*Crossoptilon auritum*, probably). For the
second 30 li the valley opens out and the road becomes a
good highway. The first intimation we received of the 361
approach to Labrang were the white and blue tents dotted

361 over the mountain slopes, and then a sudden bend of the valley reveals the gilt-roofed temples and huge barrack-like constructions of the great monastery. The buildings are, I should say, without parallel in the whole of China for magnificence, solidity, and size, and present a most startling appearance in that wild and sparsely populated region of mountains and grass-lands.

Labrang (Chinese Labalang Ssu) lies at an altitude of about 9000 feet in the valley of the Tahsia River just below the level of the grass-lands which commence immediately to the west. It is a regular town in itself containing over 3000 monks as well as a considerable floating population of visiting Tibetans, hundreds of whom were at the time of 792 our visit encamped in the neighbourhood. The monastery is the most important religious centre between Lassa and Urga, not excluding the better known establishment of [373] Kumbum (T'a-erh Ssu) near Hsining. It contains a university which attracts students from all parts of Tibet and Mongolia, and even Siberia. The monastic authorities exercise control over the neighbouring Tibetans and until recently over Chinese as well. Of late, however, the chief lama, a Reincarnation (referred to as a Hutukotu by the Chinese), has fallen much under the influence of the Mahomedans of Ho Chou, and the monks are no longer as unruly and hostile to foreigners as formerly; at the time of our visit they had even applied for the establishment of an agency of the Chinese Post Office at Labrang. All the same it is advisable for foreign visitors to be provided with an introduction from [443] some Tibetan or Mahomedan authority. A li or two from the monastery is the usual Chinese, or rather Mahomedan, bazaar. These large monasteries on the Kokonor border are ~~792~~ commercial as well as religious centres, and the Chinese 438 trading villages attached to them resemble in a way the foreign settlements attached to Chinese cities opened to foreign trade. This border trade is almost entirely in the hands of the Mahomedans, and even where the Chinese take a hand in it, it is through the agency of Mahomedan middlemen, called *Hsiehchia*, who travel amongst the Tibetans further west, and barter Chinese wares for their produce, especially wool. There are many queer tales about Labrang to be heard locally.

484 with the goods of the Mahomedan merchants of Ho
Chou.

We passed the night at Ch'ingshui, where we met a
202 military officer sent up to escort us down into China Proper
who calmly informed us with little apparent interest that
China and Japan were at war. This news afterwards turned
out to be a local echo of the crisis existing between the two
countries two months previously, and the incident shows
that even today momentous events on the coast have
comparatively little interest for the inhabitants of the far
133 interior. Below Ch'ingshui the path continues through
487 winding gorges with the foaming torrent hemmed in by
forest-clad mountains for 20 li to the likin barrier of T'ung-
men Kuan, where the gorges debouch on to an open cultivated
valley. This is one of the numerous "Gates" leading into
and out of China Proper on her western and northern
frontiers. There is a bit of an old wall to be seen, perhaps
a portion of the Kokonor loop of the Great Wall. From
here to Ho Chou, a distance of 60 li, a good highway runs
down the fertile valley past numerous Mahomedan villages.
We did not see the valley at its best, because it poured with
rain during the whole march, and the clay soil was turned
into a slippery morass; at one place, crossing a nullah by
a narrow causeway, one of our mule litters containing a
cook was overturned into the ditch, and remained literally
upside down with the eight legs of the two mules pointing
skywards for some time, till they were hauled out in that
position, no damage being done.

361 Ho Chou (new name T'aoho Hsien) is a pleasant little
city lying in a most delightful valley plain, from five to six
634 thousand feet above the sea, sheltered by high mountains,
and as fertile as a garden. The mountains to the west and
south-west (T'aitzu Shan) are very bold and rocky, and
carried a good deal of snow at the time of our visit (middle
of July). Ho Chou itself consists of a small Chinese town
with large and busy Mahomedan suburbs, containing many
fine mosques and seminaries. It is the centre of Mahomedan
power and influence in the province, and General Ma An-
liang, who actually lives a day's journey or so away near the
634 Yellow River, has a fine residence in the suburb. The
563 Chinese magistrate in the city seems to have little to do

080 meaningless jargon of transliterated Chinese characters, does more harm than good to the cause of Christianity. A translation of the Old Testament, distributed, in accordance with the declared policy of the Bible Societies, without notes or comment, cannot but compare unfavourably with the austerely pure classics of Confucius. In striking contrast to the work of the Bible Societies is that carried on by the Christian Literature Society in its dissemination of wholesome modern literature.

487 From Ho Chou to Lanchou Fu is a three days' journey called 210 li. The road runs in a north-westerly direction
[491] across the fertile valley to reach the Tahsia River, which is crossed by a well-built wooden bridge. From here it ascends
133 steeply over hills of loess and red clay for a few hundred feet, and then runs along a ridge between two deep narrow valleys for 35 li to the village of Sonanpa. The divide between the T'ao and Tahsia rivers is crossed just before reaching Sonanpa, a village with inns perched up on the top of the ridge, where we passed the night.

On the following day's march the road continues along an undulating ridge, gradually descending, for four hours' march to the village of Tawant'ou, lying on the edge of the loess mountains overlooking the T'ao River valley, into which the road drops by a long and very steep descent to
• [361] reach the township of T'angwanch'uan. This place is about half-way between Ho Chou and Lanchou Fu and is the
[312] largest centre passed on the way. The T'ao valley in the neighbourhood is irrigated and fertile, but the surrounding hills are bare of all vegetation, and the country is absolute desert where irrigation ceases. The geological formation of the hills, loess superimposed on red sandstone weathered into pinnacles and pillars of all kinds of shapes and designs, presents a most curious sight. In the valley the noonday heat of the midsummer sun reflected off the desert rocks was terrific. The T'ao River, here about 80 yards wide, deep and rapid, is crossed by a ferry, and the road continues north-east through desolate sandy hills to Manp'ing, a miserable village, the end of the stage and 80 li from Lanchou. This place is in the district of Shani, which is mostly desert.

From Manp'ing the road ascends through a desolate the P'ingfan River a few li south of Hung Ch'engtzu, a small 487 walled town and the end of the second stage from Lanchou. 133

From Hung Ch'engtzu to the district city of P'ingfan is a pleasant march of 70 li up the fertile valley, past several villages, including the township of Nan Tatung about half-way. A mile before getting in the old Manchu garrison 712 town of Chuang-lang T'ing is passed, imposing in appearance with its well-built walls, but nowadays an empty shell. The remnants of these old Manchu garrisons in Western Kansu are now, as elsewhere, in extreme poverty. But their existence 563 at any rate gives the province the distinction of being, so far as I know, the only one of the eighteen provinces which contains a resident population of the five races, symbolised by the new five coloured national flag, which go to make up the Republic, Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, and Mahomedans. The Union of Races represented by this flag has hardly become a reality yet; and is perhaps not likely to materialise until the Chinese cease fighting the Tibetans and grant them autonomy as a self-governing dominion of the Chinese commonwealth on the lines of the relationship between Canada or Australia and the rest of the British Empire. P'ingfan is a prosperous little place, the centre of a [361] rich irrigated valley, and is of some importance as the junction of roads to Lanchou, Hsining, Liangchou, and Ninghsia, the four largest towns of Western Kansu.

From P'ingfan the road continues up the valley with 487 the ruins of the Great Wall on the right hand, the scenery 133 becoming wilder and cultivation and habitations less as one proceeds. Thirty li out the mountains close in on the valley to form a gorge, and shortly afterwards the river is forded to [491] reach the village and former posting stage of Wusheng Yi, 40 li from P'ingfan. Beyond this place the valley becomes flat and open and assumes a plateau-like character, with patches of cultivation here and there. Another 40 li brings one to the village and ruined fort of Ch'ak'ou Yi, the end of a stage of 80 li. General desolation and ruins are the features of this part of Kansu, intensified to us perhaps by the fact that we rode during the afternoon through a succession of bitterly cold hailstorms, the elevation being close on 9000 feet. The remains of the Great Wall, the ruins of farms, villages, and forts, the abandoned fields in the marshy valley,

underlings that a mule must be found, and the latter had 487
gone round to the inn as the most likely place to find a
suitable animal, and had simply walked off with the best 133
one they could lay hands on.

At Kulang one is 120 li, two short marches, from
Liangchou. The road runs at first across a loess plain
dotted with fortified farms past the village of Shuangt'a to
the old posting station of Chingpien Yi, a short stage of 50
li. The villages and post stations on this side of the divide 361
are even more dilapidated than those further east, and are
mostly nothing but a heap of ruins round an inn or two.
The people here seem to have given up living in villages, so
prominent a feature of Chinese life in most provinces, and
occupy the fortress-farms with which the plains are dotted.
From Chingpien Yi to Liangchou the road continues across 487
the level plain which is in places almost entirely covered
with loose stones, rendering the going very slow and tiring. 133
On the left hand the view is bounded by the snow-capped
Nan Shan; on the right the plain extends to the horizon. The
twin pagodas of Liangchou form a prominent landmark
denoting the approach to the city.

Liangchou Fu, now known as Wuwei Hsien, is about the
most important city, commercially and politically, in Western
Kansu. It lies in an irrigated plain dotted with fertile oases [812]
between the Nan Shan mountains and the desert of Alashan.
This plain is traversed by numerous streams and irrigation
channels flowing down from the snows of the mountains
to lose themselves eventually in the sands of the desert, and
owing to this never failing supply of water for irrigation
purposes is a very fertile and productive region. The
inhabitants of Liangchou and the surrounding plains are
mostly Chinese; the whole region was devastated during the
big rebellion, and was again laid waste by marauding bands
of Mahomedans from the Hsining neighbourhood during
the rebellion of 1895. The interior of the city is very poor- 361
looking and dilapidated, like most Kansu towns, and the
streets are almost entirely covered with the same loose
stones found outside; riding being the only method of
getting about, these stones are a great drawback to the place.
There is a station of the China Inland Mission at Liangchou 797
which can compete with those at Hsining and Ninghsia for

008

to cultivation, has of course had a great effect on the good results obtained. It now remains to be seen whether suppression can be maintained after the withdrawal of this foreign stimulus. In the eastern provinces where the upper and middle classes are more or less in contact with the West a strong native public opinion now exists against opium; the same cannot be said of the backward North West; and it is there that the authorities will have to watch for recrudescence of cultivation. As regards the suppression of smoking and consumption generally, the same success has by no means been attained, and in out of the way parts it appears to be indulged in much as formerly. In view of the increasing scarcity of the drug, however, and the rising price, this cannot really be the case, and if suppression of cultivation is strictly adhered to, the existing stocks will gradually be exhausted, and the rising generation will grow up without contracting the opium habit.

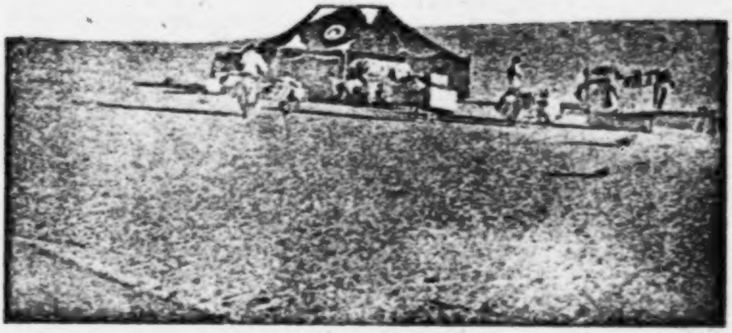
We rested at Liangchou for a day, being entertained by 133 the officials, and then left for Chenfan, distant three marches. The first stage was 65 li to a group of farms called Chungchia 487 Ta Men lying on the edge of the desert. For the first three hours the road, a good cart-track, lies through rich irrigated country, and for the rest of the way belts of sandy desert alternate with irrigated fields. The water, where it is not [271] obtainable from irrigation channels, is very brackish. From Chungchia Ta Men the road continues north across a sandy plain between the desert on the right hand and cultivated lands on the left. Farms with wells are passed 20 and 40 li [312] out. Hsiangchia Wan, the end of another stage of 65 li, is a thickly populated oasis on the edge of the desert, lying [361] just east of a range of barren hills which form a prominent landmark from afar. The snow mountains behind Liangchou now fade out of sight. From here to Chenfan Hsien is a distance of 70 li. The trail still runs north over a sandy plain covered with scrub and rough grass with a river on the left hand, the latter formed by the junction of various streams and irrigation channels, and flowing north to water the Chenfan oasis and beyond to lose itself in the sands of the desert. Branches of this stream have to be forded at [491] various points; though quite shallow, they contain dangerous quicksands and should be approached with care. Thirty-five

133 li out cultivation and houses are reached at Kaochia Ta Men,
487 the beginning of the large Chenfan oasis, and for the rest
of the stage the road runs through rich irrigated lands with
occasional excursions into sand dunes.

• 361 Chenfan Hsien is a prosperous little district city in a
highly fertile oasis. Immediately round the town is a belt
312 of rich cultivation, and patches of irrigated land occur in the
243 desert for 200 li to the north. There are no villages in these
oases, the people living entirely in walled farms. Wheat is
the main crop raised, and the abundant water supply from
the snow-fed streams for irrigation purposes, combined with
[132] an almost rainless climate, appears to assure good crops
with machine-like regularity. Chenfan compares favourably
361 with most towns in Kansu, the streets are clean and well
634 kept, there is a noticeable absence of ruins, and the shops
display a surprising variety of goods. At the time of our
visit the district enjoyed the services of one of the best
territorial officials we met throughout the North West, a
young man who really appeared to have the interests of the
people at heart, and to devote himself as far as lay in his
power to improve their lot. He remarked that the post,
though so isolated, was pleasant enough in the summer, but
that in the winter the north winds from the Alashan desert
were terrible, much worse than the severest winter sandstorms
ever experienced at Peking. The inhabitants of the
surrounding oases seem entirely cut off from the rest of
487 China, and form little self-supporting communities. Chenfan
itself, however, is, strange to say, in direct communication
133 with Tientsin and the coast by means of a much frequented
camel route from Kueihua Ch'eng to Liangchou across the
Mongolian grass country and the Alashan desert. This road,
which debouches from the desert at Chenfan, enables the
Mahomedans of the Ho Chou and Hsining neighbourhood
to communicate with the coast without passing through
Chinese Kansu at all.

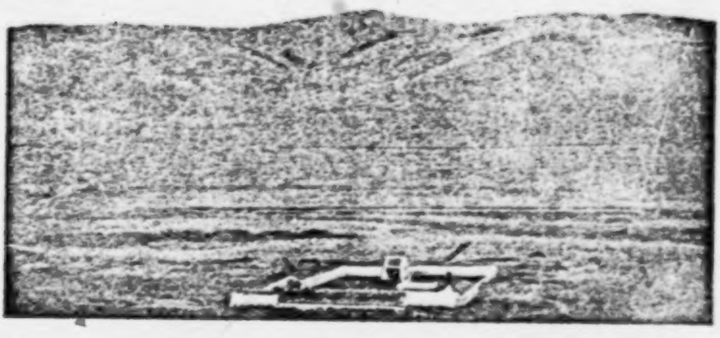
From Chenfan we had to proceed to Hsining, the frontier town on the high road to the Kokonor and Tibet. Enquiries showed that we had the choice of two roads, to the north or south of the snow mountains behind Liangchou respectively. As the latter would have meant retracing our steps to Kulang, we decided to follow the former, which entailed going due

PLATE XXXVII



CAMP IN THE ALASHAN DESERT, NEAR CHENFAN

361



CHINESE SETTLER'S CATTLE-FARM ON THE GRASS-LANDS

[Facing p. 162].

634 provincial treasury in silver at an old-established rate much
651 below the market price, permitting a considerable profit to
be made on the transaction. The productiveness of the land
is of course entirely dependent on the irrigation streams from
the snows of the Nan Shan, the magistrate informing us that
he had been nine months at his post and only seen rain fall
on two occasions.

487 The following day's march of 70 li to the oasis of Shehsia
Kou would have been easy enough had we not lost our way.
133 We started at 3 a.m. in order to try and reach the wells of
T'ou Ching, 40 li out, before the sun got too hot. The trail
led across a waste of sand hills and soon ceased to exist.
The desert is devoid of all vegetation and lifeless except for
[134] antelope, which were constantly in view; what they find to
eat I cannot imagine. After we had been marching for some
hours the soldier from Chenfan who was acting as guide
announced that he had lost the way. Looking for the wells
where we were to have our midday halt was like searching
for a needle in a haystack, and the position was unpleasant
enough. Altogether we wandered round, steering more or
less west, for some seven or eight hours, suffering greatly
from thirst, with the sand often over the ponies fetlocks.
Our only landmark was an ancient ruined tower, the remains
of some old fortification in this region, perhaps a part of
the Great Wall. At last one of the soldiers sent out to
reconnoitre from a rise descried the tents pitched at the
wells in pretty well the opposite direction to that in which
we were then trekking, and an hour later men and animals
were satisfying their thirst. Another three hours' march
across the desert brought us to the oasis of Shehsia Kou,
where we were comfortably lodged in the interior of one
of the fortified farms so common in this region.

The next stage is another desert march of 80 li to the
village of Ningyuan P'u, but there is an oasis, Tung Wan,
half-way, the going is better, and we took care not to lose
[361] our way. Ningyuan P'u is a walled village at the mouth of
an irrigated gorge where the mountains meet the desert plain.
From here to Yungch'ang is a distance of 75 li. The trail
follows up the irrigated valley for 35 li to the hamlet of
Tsungchia Chai, where it turns up a barren stony ravine,
crosses a low pass, and descends across an arid sloping

and the black rectangular tents of nomad Tibetans, the usual 233
hinterland of *Ts'ao Ti* (Grass Lands), which everywhere in
the north and west lie behind the border ranges of China.
Apart from the nomads and their ponies, yak, and cattle,
the only sign of life were the huge vultures, which were [136]
extraordinarily abundant. The final ascent to the pass is by
easy gradients, and a similar descent of about 10 li brings 487
one to Êpo, a dot of a place lying in a sea of grass. 133

Êpo (this is the regular romanisation of the Chinese
characters, pronounced Obaw) is a small walled village and 361
former fort situated in a shallow valley sloping from east
to west, surrounded by grassy downs and backed by rocky
snow capped mountains. The elevation is probably between
11,000 and 12,000 feet, and there is no cultivation, the 241
necessary grain being brought up from below. The entire
community, composed of a few Mahomedan Chinese, 233
seemed to be engaged in the collection of wool, with
occasional purchases of musk and deer horns. The latter 381
(wapiti antlers) when old are quite cheap and are collected
and sent down to China for the manufacture of glue; when
in velvet they are extremely valuable and are ground up 886
to form the well-known Chinese medicine for revivifying
the old. This medicine is said to be very powerful, and I
was informed by a member of our party, who here purchased
a pair for a friend, that care must be exercised in taking
a dose to see that the powder comes equally from both
antlers, otherwise there is a grave danger that the patient
may be revivified on one side only! Musk may also be 303
profitably purchased at Êpo, and for some days afterwards
our caravan was redolent with it. Wherever one may pack
a pod of musk it is guaranteed to make its presence widely
known. The advantage of buying musk at a place like Êpo,
apart from its cheapness, is that one is pretty certain to get
the genuine article, adulteration being widely practised in
the trade in China.

Êpo appears to lie actually on the Kansu-Kokonor border 487
(though boundaries are vague in those parts), and its
position is of some strategic importance as commanding
one of the few routes from Kansu and Mongolia up to the
Kokonor, north of Hsining. We were met here by some
Mahomedan braves sent up from the Hsining and Tatung

CHAPTER XII

FROM ÊPO SOUTH ACROSS THE KOKONOR GRASS COUNTRY TO HSINING, AND THENCE BACK TO LANCHOU FU

Grass lands and snow mountains—Gold washing—Kokonor Mongols—Yungan—Pei Tatung—Passage of Tatung River and Tapan Shan—Tatung or Maopeisheng—Chinese place-names in foreign guise—Hsinch'eng and a loop of the Great Wall—Hsining—Chinese control over the Kokonor territory—Kansu wool trade—Kansu ponies—Hsining to Lanchou Fu—Aborigines—Defile of Laoya—Sandstone and loess—Copper—Lanchou water melons.

FROM Êpo the trail runs south for three very long stages, 487 each one probably well over 30 miles in length, across the grass country on the Kokonor border. Along this border 361 stretches an old line of walled military posts, Êpo, Yungan, 133 and Pei Tatung, which make up the stages, and the grass lands being otherwise uninhabited except by a few nomads, it is necessary for the traveller unprovided with tents to cover each of these long marches in the day.

Leaving Êpo the track runs south-east up the flat grassy valley, which is dotted with the black tents of Tibetan nomads and countless flocks of sheep. After some hours' 133 march the stream is left on the right hand and the path 487 rises gradually to an easy pass 40 li from Êpo. The view from the summit (between 12,000 and 13,000 feet) is the same on both sides, treeless grassy downs and rocky mountains streaked with snow. Immediately to the south-east rises a gigantic snow mountain, being apparently another view of the snow range which we saw south of Kaoku Ch'eng, and which seems to lie immediately behind Liangchou. There appeared to be thousands of feet of snow on this mountain in early August, and its height must be some 18,000 feet or more. This pass, like the Wushao Ling, is the watershed between the Yellow River and the Central Asian basins, and we also gathered from the soldiers who

[p167]

nominally responsible to the Chinese officials at Hsining. 563
Mongol tribes are found living in the bend of the Yellow 634
River, near the Golok country, and even as far south as
the country between Jyekundo and Nagchuka towards
Lassa, but appear to have become completely Tibetanised,
and to retain only the tradition of their origin.

Yungan is a replica of Êpo, only poorer, an old walled 361
post with the interior almost entirely in ruins. It lies not 563
far from the Tatung River, surrounded by grassy downs
and overlooked by rocky snow-capped ranges. One is here
on the reverse side of the outer barrier range of the Nan
Shan, the snows of which provide the water for the streams
which fertilize the Liangchou oases. This portion of the
Kokonor border is the meeting-point of the four widely-spread races of High Asia, Chinese, Mahomedans, Tibetans,
and Mongols.

From Yungan to Pei Tatung is another long march of 133
over 100 li. The trail runs east and then south-east across 487
undulating grass prairies dotted with herds of yak for 45 li
to a solitary inn or ranch known as Paishui Ho, whence
it continues across a plain, gradually approaching the
Tatung River, to reach Pei Tatung. The going is excellent
across grass all the way. Pei Tatung, lying on the left bank
of the Tatung River, is another walled village mostly in
ruins. Barley is grown in the neighbourhood, the first [243]
cultivation met with since entering the Pien Tu K'ou from
Maying Tung. The valley of the Tatung River in this neighbourhood consists of a rich grass prairie bounded on either
side by rocky snow-capped ranges; to the south the mountains
approach close to the river; to the north they rise on the
other side of the plain. Between Kueitê on the Yellow
River and Kanchou in Western Kansu the Nan Shan
consist of three huge parallel ranges, dividing off the valleys
of the Tatung, Hsining, and Yellow rivers. We were now
between the two highest and most northern of these ranges.

The following day's march occupied us from dawn till
eight o'clock at night, the distance being called 100 li but
entailing the passage of the Tatung River and of a high
pass known as the Tapan Shan. The river, some eighty 133
yards wide (in August), deep, and very rapid, has to be 497
crossed immediately on leaving Pei Tatung. Men and loads
491

canny Mahomedan innkeeper, seeing such a large party of 485
officials and soldiers (everywhere unwelcome guests owing
to their custom of helping themselves to what they want and
not always paying for it), assured us it was only 30 or 40
li to Tatung Hsien by a good road; so we took the road 133
again after a rest, and had another weary six hours' march
before getting in. The road lies down a narrow picturesque 487
valley, in which trees, farms, and cultivation make their
appearance again, and finally debouches on to a broad and [241]
fertile valley, closely cultivated and thickly populated, which
is crossed to reach Tatung Hsien. I have but the vaguest
idea of the latter part of this long march, which was finished
by the light of lanterns in the dark, beyond remembering
that we forded a stream running in various branches just
before getting in, and narrowly missed taking an evening
bath on more than one occasion.

Tatung Hsien is a prosperous city, the centre of a fertile 361
corn-growing valley populated largely by Mahomedans.
The elevation is about 8000 feet and the wheat was ripening
for harvest during the middle of August. It reminded us
somewhat of Ho Chou. Being comfortably quartered here
in an old military yamen, we enjoyed a welcome day's rest.
Tatung Hsien is also known locally by its old name of
Maopeisheng, and usually appears on foreign maps under
that name in various guises. If a traveller in China, unacquainted
with Chinese characters and their usual romanisation,
writes down the names of places as they sound to his
ear, the results are often unrecognizable; further confusion
is entailed by the varying forms of romanisation in use in
different European languages. There are several townships
called Tatung in Western Kansu; they are sometimes distinguished
by being referred to as Tatung Hsien, Nan
Tatung, Pei Tatung, and Hsi Tatung, but confusion often
results.

From Tatung to Hsining is a distance of 110 li by a good 487
cart track down a fertile and well-cultivated valley past 133
numerous farms and villages. The march may be divided
into two by halting at the walled township of Hsin Ch'eng,
40 li out, where the valley narrows to a defile and is barred
by an old wall with a gate and the inevitable likin barrier. 712
This is considered by some to be a branch of the Great

712 Wall; if this is so, the old gate and wall at T'ungmen Kuan,
between Labrang and Ho Chou, is probably a portion of
the same loop, which must have been constructed to protect
the Hsining region against the incursions of Tibetans or
Mongols from the Kokonor, and the course and history of
133 which it would be interesting to trace. The road eventually
debouches on to the city of Hsining, lying in a small cultivated
489 plain of loess formed by the junction of three valleys, the
Pei Ch'uan from Tatung Hsien, the Hsi Ch'uan from Tanko
T'ing, and the Nan Ch'uan from T'a-erh Ssu (Kumbum),
the combined streams going to make up the Hsining River.

● [361] Hsining is one of the chief cities of Kansu, being the
[241] centre of a region of fertile corn-growing valleys, producing
wheat, barley, and particularly beans. Its commercial
439 importance arises from its position near the Kokonor
648 border, and together with Tanko T'ing, a day's journey
further west, it commands the bulk of the valuable Kokonor
trade in skins, furs, deer horns, musk, gold, and particularly
wool. A state of passive hostility has reigned between
China and Tibet since the collapse of Chinese power
in Lassa consequent on the revolution, and the Szechuan-Tibetan
trade through Tachienlu has suffered greatly
thereby; the Hsining and Tanko trade, on the other hand,
has continued uninterruptedly throughout these troubles,
and has perhaps even increased. As elsewhere on this
border this trade is largely in the hands of the Mahomedans.
487 Before the Mahomedan rebellion of 1860–70 the Hsining-Kokonor
road to Lassa was the most frequented route
between China and Tibet, but was then replaced by the
Szechuan road through Tachienlu; now it is coming into
361 its own again. The interior of the city is fairly prosperous in
appearance as far as Kansu towns go, but by no means
indicative of the commercial and political importance of the
place. The east suburb, the former Mahomedan quarter, is
still completely in ruins, a relic of the last Mahomedan
rebellion in 1895, when the city successfully withstood a
siege by the rebels. The walls are particularly formidable
and well built.

636 Hsining, as well as being the seat of a Taoyin and a
Mahomedan General, has always been the residence of the
high Chinese official controlling the immense territory of

similarly on the grass lands north of Peking a *Hsi K'ou* 231 *Ma* (pony from the Western Passes, i.e. Kansu) is a drug 492 in the market; and both are useless on the stone paved paths south of the Ch'inling Shan, where the diminutive stallions of Szechuan, Yunnan, and Kueichou alone are employed. Small horses from Turkestan are also often seen in Kansu, but they are not as satisfactory to use as the native ponies. A *sine qua non* of all travelling ponies is that they should be able to *tsou*, which means the smooth amble or pace of four to five miles an hour always used by the travelling horseman in Eastern Asia; a pony that cannot *tsou* is practically worthless as a mount in Chinese eyes, and the reason will be apparent to anyone who has tried to do a long journey on a pony which has no pace between a slow walk and a slow trot.

From Hsining to Lanchou there are two roads, a cart 487 track *via* P'ingfan in eight stages, and a mule road down the Hsining River in six stages; we followed the latter. The 133 first day's march is one of 75 li down the valley, which is most of the way a mile or so wide and bounded by bare dreary hills of loess and red sandstone patched with a white alkaline efflorescence, to the village of Changch'i Chai. [361] Twenty-five li out at the hamlet of Hsiaohsia K'ou the hills close in to form a short defile, and the road crosses the river by a good bridge. Much of the valley is an arid waste like the hills, as the river runs part of the way in a trough at a lower level, thus rendering irrigation impossible. The next stage is one of 80 li to the village of Kao Miaotzu. The trail runs down the valley, fertile where irrigation can be practised; it passes through a rocky defile 15 li out and reaches the small district city of Nienpo 50 li out. Occasional glimpses are caught of the high range to the south separating the Hsining River from the Yellow River. There is a curious [563] mixture of races in this neighbourhood, including some people locally called *T'u Jen*, who were described to us as "tame" aborigines, and some Mahomedans who are said to speak a Mongolian dialect. There is plenty of subject matter for the ethnologist's study in Western Kansu, as in Western Szechuan and Yunnan.

From Kao Miaotzu the road continues down the cultivated valley for 20 li to the village of Laoya. Here the

487 valley narrows to a rocky gorge, and the cart track branches off towards P'ingfan. The mule trail through this defile, 133 which is some 40 li in length, is a nightmare of a path, especially in wet weather, being very rough and narrow, ledged in the cliff side above the roaring waters of the Hsining River; two-thirds of the way through there is an opening and an inn, Yangchia Tientzu, where we had a welcome rest. From the eastern end of this gorge to Hsiangt'ang, the end of the stage, is a distance of ten li. The peculiarity of the valley in this neighbourhood is that the cultivated fields are entirely covered with large stones which are placed there on purpose, in order, we were told, to [244] preserve the moisture in the ground. These stone-covered fields produce most excellent melons of various kinds, and the sight of the huge juicy fruit apparently growing out of bare stones is a remarkable one.

Just below Hsiangt'ang the Tatung River is crossed by [191] a good wooden bridge at the point where it debouches from a defile in the mountains on to the valley of the Hsining River; it is here less than twenty yards wide, but very deep and rapid, and flows between almost perpendicular cliffs of rock; though it contains much the greater volume of water, it joins the Hsining River in the form of a tributary, issuing from a cleft in the mountains on to the open valley of the latter. From here the trail continues down the arid valley, being rough and stony most of the way, especially where it climbs in and out of side nullahs or ascends the face of the cliff. Fifty li out a ruined wall and fort are passed, barring the valley at a narrow point, and just before reaching the village of Hotsuitzu, the end of a stage of 75 li, the river washes the left-hand side of the valley, and the weary traveller is forced to follow a narrow footpath high up the face of the sandstone cliff; here a block of sandstone, becoming detached from higher up on the cliff and hurling itself into the torrent below, only missed by a few feet bringing the career of the principal member of the expedition to an abrupt termination. The valley round the village of [361] Hotsuitzu is desolate in the extreme, bare red sandstone with a layer of yellow loess superimposed like icing on a cake. It is difficult to persuade oneself that this loess was not laid down by water. One of the arguments in favour

501 forty feet in length by ten to fifteen in breadth, with the lumber piled up in the centre to form a platform a foot or so above the water, on which we pitched our tents; I have seldom struck a pleasanter method of travel in China, the only objection being the floor of pine logs, which meant that if one dropped any small article it was irrecoverable except by taking the raft to pieces. We subsequently learned that we had been lucky in securing particularly fine rafts, as they consisted of a flotilla of telegraph poles *en route* from the Kokonor forests above Hsining to Ninghsia for the construction of a new telegraph line from that place across the Ordos desert to Paot'ou.

431 We were delayed a few days in Lanchou while our rafts were being got ready and various other preparations being made. It is as well to put a few days' provisions on board to last till one gets to Chungwei; all kinds of presents were thrust upon us in the way of supplies by our hospitable hosts, the Governor and his staff, including a skin bag of the famous dried apricots which are thus exported from Central Tibet—or perhaps they even come from India.
436 A new supply of silver had also to be secured, for at the time we were in Kansu the old-fashioned lumps of silver and strings of cash were still the only currency available; two years later travelling in Shensi and Szechuan we were able to use silver dollars and copper cents even in the most out of the way parts, a great convenience; the buying up of the cash for the export of the copper they contain, which is now going on so extensively throughout China, may be illegal, but it is hardly to be regretted by the tourist in the interior, if it means the gradual disappearance of this dirty and cumbersome form of currency.

487 We finally left Lanchou on August 26 on our overland march to Powan, distant three marches of 65, 80, and 70 li
133 respectively. The road runs down the left bank of the Yellow River for about 15 li, and then, turning north up a gully, winds through a maze of low waterless hills of loess for the
[36] rest of the way to the walled village of Ch'ang Ch'uantzu in the valley of a brackish rivulet, the end of the first stage. The second day's march is through similar desert hills to the hamlet of Hsikou. In places the small shallow valleys are cultivated and produce millet and inferior melons, but

the landscape is dreary in the extreme, the population scanty 133
and miserably poor, supplies non-existent, and the water, 487
where it is found, brackish. The third day's march is through
similar country until, 50 li from Hsikou, the trail debouches
from these barren hills on to a small irrigated plain alongside
the Yellow River, which here issues from a cleft in the
mountains; at the further end of the plain lies the long
straggling village of Powan. To the north and south are [361]
bare desolate mountains.

At Powan we abandoned our train of Kansu pack-mules. 492
These particular mules, each carrying between two and three hundred pounds, had accompanied us for three to four months, during which period they had covered over 2000 miles without a hitch, with never a sore back, and never one sick or lame. The Kansu mule is perhaps the finest in the world; his only drawback is that he requires a lot of grain and does not do well in the grass country. The muleteers, Kansu men, walked the entire distance and never gave us any trouble whatsoever; both they and their animals seemed capable of going on for ever as long as they both got plenty to eat. The Kansu pack-mules are all entires, and their strength and endurance are simply astounding; the mares are worked in carts.

We found our rafts waiting for us, having accomplished 501
safely in a few hours the journey which had taken us three days. Two of them were fitted out to take our ten ponies, and two others had tents pitched for our accommodation; another carried the soldiers of our escort, and two more were laden with odds and ends of merchandize belonging apparently to the owner of the lumber. By midday the whole flotilla of seven were swirling down the river under the autumn sun, and as we reclined in front of our tents and watched the sandstone cliffs shoot by after so many months of mountain and desert we felt thoroughly at peace
with things generally. The river flowed between low hills of 133
red sandstone with loess superimposed, grass covered on
the right bank and desert on the left. In places small [376]
plains, like that in which Powan lies, opened out on either
side; they were always irrigated by huge water wheels, of exactly the same type as those so common in Szechuan, and their green trees and fertile fields formed a striking contrast

to the background of desert hills.

000 to the background of desert hills. The red sandstone cliffs bordering the river are pocked with square caves similar to those on the Min River and other streams in Szechuan. 342 The origin and use of these caves, whether they are old tombs or the former dwelling-places of an aboriginal race, are, I believe, still unknown. Here on the Yellow River several of them were inhabited and provided with ropes and ladders as means of access. I should have liked to have visited the inhabitants, but it was quite impossible to stop the heavy rafts in the swift current under the base of a perpendicular cliff of rock; it is very strange that anyone should want to live in a cave half-way up a sandstone cliff overhanging the Yellow River, with no other means of access but a rope or ladder up or down the rock, unless it be the inherited custom to do so, or as a refuge against robbers. In my experience these square-faced caves, which are of an entirely different style of architecture to the round-arched caves in the loess in which millions of Chinese still dwell, are only found in the faces of sandstone cliffs overlooking rivers.

● [361] Three hours below Powan we reached the district city
487 of Chingyuan Hsien on the right bank of the river; it lies on an old main road from Shensi to Lanchou *via* Haich'eng
133 which was in general use before the construction of the present road across the Liupan Shan, and appears still to
[484] carry a certain amount of traffic, mostly camel caravans. The valley opens out in this neighbourhood and there are cultivated strips along both banks for a space. Four hours
133 below Chingyuan the river, hitherto flowing north-east, is running north-west between sandstone cliffs owing to the incidence of a range of mountains on the right front; this range appears to me to connect the main Nan Shan range with the Liupan Shan, which itself seems to run S.E. to join the Ch'inling Shan near Paochi, thus forming one continuous barrier trending across North West China from N.W. to S.E.; but this is only a guess. Near here we tied up for the night to some rocks on a shelving sand-bank.

Two hours further on the mountains are reached and the river enters a series of bare rocky gorges hemmed in by precipitous cliffs of red sandstone and shale, opening out in places to reveal a desolate wilderness of reddish mountains

000 stretches. So far our river journey had been a complete success; but now things began to go wrong, and we spent 502 three days making a few miles owing to the rafts constantly running aground, when, owing to their unwieldy weight, it was an extremely difficult matter to move them. The culminating misfortune was a tremendous storm of rain and wind one night, which blew our rafts adrift and scattered them over various sand-banks miles apart in impossible positions. We decided therefore to abandon them, and an appeal to the Chungwei magistrate having produced a couple of small boats, we transhipped our effects, sending the ponies overland to Ninghsia, distant a few days' journey. To be on board a raft stuck on a sand-bank in the middle of the Yellow River for two or three days is a good test 136 of one's patience. I at first passed the time by shooting geese, which here began to appear in some numbers, but had to desist as no one would eat them; the Chinese goose, though a magnificent bird to shoot, is very tough and stringy to eat, and is only palatable if carefully cooked and stuffed. Fortunately the banks were here irrigated and inhabited 312 and one could buy grain and vegetables. Our water supply, as all the way down, was the river; we had no filters, but a pinch of alum in a bucket soon changes the yellow pea-soupy liquid into clear water; another method of eliminating the yellow mud is to scoop a small hole in a pebbly bit of beach, which immediately fills with clear filtered water.

312 Making a fresh start in our small boats we floated down stream rapidly past several villages for some twelve hours 133 to the walled township of Kuangwu, where the cultivated 361 strips on both banks come to an end, and the large irrigation canal, which commences above Chungwei, rejoins the river. The abrupt cessation of these irrigated lands is due to a range of low mountains through which the Yellow River here breaks its way, and which separate the irrigated plains of Chungwei and Ningan from those of Ninghsia and Chinch'i. The desert everywhere begins where irrigation ceases. The passage through the gorge in these hills below Kuangwu takes about an hour, the exit being marked by temples on either side, and the river emerging on to a vast plain. A couple of hours further down we tied up at a village on the right bank not far from the district city of

Chinch'i, where we were able to examine some of the 312 wonderful irrigation works which render these huge plains, 133 otherwise desert, so fertile. There are similar works on the other bank near the village of Tapa. Their destruction 361 would turn one of the richest plains in North China into a desert. In the North West irrigation is the key to agricultural prosperity, and though the ancient Chinese have done so much in this region, modern engineers could probably accomplish wonders in turning immense areas of what is still desert into fertile lands. Especially lower down, where the river makes its great bend round the Ordos, there would seem to be great openings for modern irrigation works.

Chinch'i Hsien, formerly known as Chinch'i P'u or (361) Ningling T'ing, is a Mahomedan centre, and was the chief rebel stronghold in the great rebellion. The Mahomedans 563 are still very powerful in this region, where their settlements 669 extend south through Haich'eng and Kuyuan to P'ingliang in Eastern Kansu. T'ung Fu-hsiang's family own large estates in the neighbourhood, which they appear to have acquired after the capture of Chinch'i in 1871 by the latter. This event was the beginning of the end of the rebellion in Kansu, which led to the eventual defeat of Yakub Beg and the recovery of Chinese Turkestan; had the Kansu Mahomedans held out, the reconquest of Central Asia would have been rendered impossible, and the fall of Chinch'i constitutes therefore an event of the first importance in Chinese history.

Shortly before reaching the neighbourhood of Chinch'i 501 we noticed, much to our amazement, a small stern-wheel steamer tied up to the right bank. An examination through glasses showed her to be a mere rusty skeleton, and our boatmen said she had lain there for years. From subsequent enquiries in Ninghsia we learned that this vessel represented an attempt, made just before the revolution, by the Kansu Viceroy with the assistance of a Belgian gentleman to establish steam navigation on the upper Yellow River. A small river steamer was purchased, transported in sections at great expense overland and put together at Paot'ou. She seems to have made one trip up river, reaching with great difficulty the spot where she is now, and where she is likely

502 were fired at us from the bank, though our boatmen and
escort were uncertain whether they came from brigands or
from soldiers signalling us to stop; the river being wide,
however, and the current swift we did not trouble to enquire.
439 In many places when tied up to the north bank we found
the ground pitted with small holes, the work of the liquorice
222 root diggers. This is an old industry which has revived
considerably of late owing to a foreign firm commencing
to buy the produce for export. The liquorice-producing
areas in the world appear to be limited in extent, and this
133 is one of them. Twenty-four hours above Paot'ou the Wula
Shan mountains are reached, a bare rocky range running a
little inland along the north side of the river, and a
prominent landmark from afar. In this neighbourhood the
Ordos bank, hitherto uninhabited desert, begins to be
populated, and Mongols and Chinese are to be seen with
many camels, sheep, and ponies grazing on poor-looking
downs. As Paot'ou is approached farms and villages become
numerous on the north bank, and the plain between river
and mountains is a vast corn-field.

361 Paot'ou Chen (also known as Hsi Paot'ou) is a large
walled town lying a little way back from the Yellow River
243 in the corn-growing plain which slopes up towards the
Tach'ing Shan, a continuation of the Wula Shan. It is
remarkable in many respects; in the first place it is essentially
a new and growing place, unlike the dilapidated and hoary
old towns of Kansu, and is the centre of a fertile corn-
growing area which a generation ago was unoccupied except
by a few Mongols and their flocks. There is probably
plenty more good land waiting to be opened up further
west, north of the Yellow River, and the curious spectacle
may here be witnessed of the Chinese colonising Canadian-
like prairies within the borders of their own republic.
439 Secondly, as well as being a cleaning and repacking centre
for the Tientsin wool trade like Shihchu Shan, it is evidently
a commercial centre of considerable and increasing import-
ance for the import and export trade of the vast hinterland
to the west. We found more evidence of trade activity in
this isolated town than in any city in Kansu. Unfortunately,
situated as it is on the very outskirts of Chinese civilization,
Paot'ou appears to have suffered greatly from the prevailing

796 devils, and the circumambulation of the monastery by the figure of the coming Buddha seated in a car drawn by an [782] elephant, in this case a mock one. The extent of Asia covered by that curious form of Buddhism known as Tibetan Lamaism is very large, stretching as it does from the northern frontiers of India to the southern borders of Siberia, and from Ladak to the confines of Manchuria.

[361] Kueihua Ch'eng is another busy commercial town serving a hinterland extending to Kashgar, Kobdo, Ili, and 438 Uliassutai. Near by lies the old Manchu garrison fortress of Suiyuan, which gives its name to the new territory of Suiyuan; the latter includes parts of Inner Mongolia and Northern Shansi, and has its counterpart further east in the territory of Chahar, comprising portions of Eastern Inner 136 Mongolia and the Kalgan and Jehol regions of Chihli. These territories are administered on military lines. Kueihua is a good starting-point for a big-game shooting trip into the mountains further north, where remarkably fine sheep, a sort of *Ovis argali*, and wapiti can be secured, as well as the roe-deer and goral common in North China. With the Kalgan railway extension pushing on towards Kueihua, this is some of the best and most accessible big game ground in China nowadays.

487 We changed our carts at Kueihua Ch'eng and hired new ones to take us through the mountains to railhead at Feng 133 Chen, distant four long marches. The first stage is a march of 90 li to the mountain village of Shihjen Wan, the trail continuing east across the plain for six or seven hours and then running up a shallow valley for the rest of the way. Many of the higher mountain slopes were snow-clad, though the season of the year was only late September. On the following day another long march of 90 li up a valley and over a low pass brought us to the hamlet of Wuli Pa, lying on a sort of plateau of moorland country, the beginning of the grass lands of Eastern Inner Mongolia. It snowed heavily most of the day and we arrived cold, wet, and tired [485] to find the roughest of accommodation in a large cart inn. The third stage is still longer, called 110 li, to the village of T'iench'eng Ts'un, but the trail lying partly across grass country one can travel fast. The road descends through flat open valleys to a lake, where good wild-fowl shooting

can be had, and then ascends to another grassy plateau. 487
Herds of Mongolian ponies (the "China pony" of the 133
Treaty Ports) were to be seen, but the good pony country lies much further north-east, beyond Kalgan and Dolonor. The following day, September 26th, we accomplished our last march, 60 li to Feng Chen. It was freezing hard in the early morning, and we decided we had just completed our journey in time; for winter on these steppes of High Asia is very severe. The trail continues across the grass lands for two hours' march, and then runs down a broad cultivated valley plain for the rest of the way to Feng Chen, an un- [361] ●
walled township, and the railhead of the Peking-Kalgan-Kueihua extension line.

A construction train took us down to Tatung Fu, an [496]
important town of Northern Shansi, where we were lucky
enough to strike the weekly express, which runs through to [796]
Peking in one day. This was the end of our long journeys, and the reader, having accompanied us as far afield as Chengtu in Szechuan and Hsining and Liangchou in Kansu, is probably as tired of reading about them as the writer is of recording their description.

783 with material or cooking utensils. The suspicious
485 atmosphere created was always most irksome to us,
563 feeling as we did that our cleanliness much exceeded the
demands made by these self-righteous Pharisees.

The *kang* on which we slept was of a different
354 construction from those we had met with elsewhere, this
485 being due to the fact that the only fuel obtainable on
this journey is animal droppings. These *kangs* were
372 covered with movable boards, under which a hollow
space is left for piling up the dry horse-dung, which,
once set alight, will smoulder for hours. The fumes are
laden with a nauseating smell, which so permeates the
traveller's bedding and clothing as to be noticeable for
weeks. These same fumes produce an extraordinary
effect on the woodwork of the room, which rapidly
gains a surface equal in colour and polish to the best
291 old oak. The clothes of the people had now changed
from indigo-dyed cotton to undyed sheep's wool. In
286 every hamlet the older men sat in the sun spinning yarn,
[887] or knitting socks for themselves on two needles ; this
is accomplished by means of a diagonal down the centre
291 of the foot and a seam at the back. The better-dressed
287 boys wore garments of white felt. No seam was
necessary in the whole coat, as it was shaped in the
making to the size and form of the wearer. The felt
is home-made, and many times we saw men treading out
the macerated wool which is moulded to the shape
required and dried in the sun. Shoes, coats and hats
are made in this way, and whole villages are given up to
the industry.

•361 Lanchow, the capital of Kansu, is reached through a
maze of narrow gullies. It is beautifully situated on
the swift-flowing Yellow River, and is backed by the
Blue Lotus Hills. Its streets are wide and crowded,
491 and its population cosmopolitan. A splendid iron

which a tiny spring kept overflowing. Green mosses 788
lined the bed of the crystalline rivulet, and the diamond
drops reflected the sunshine. The wheel turned with
a subdued creak, which seemed almost like the murmur-
ing of the prayer inscribed on its lines of chamfered
edges—Om mani padme hum—'Hail thou jewel in the
lotus flower'—the offering of a blinded people to its
undiscerned god.

A mile apart from each other stand two walled 361
cities,[1] the more imposing of the two being the Manchu
town formerly occupied by the pensioners of the ruling
dynasty, but which now consists of a great enclosure of
uninhabited or ruined houses, so that in a space equal
to the area of a large town, at the present hour only
six or eight families are living. Of the remaining
former inhabitants many have been massacred, others
have fled, and the ranks of the beggars have been
replenished by these truly unfortunate people. The 366
Chinese city consists of quiet streets busy only on market
days, the shops of which being so poorly provided with
the necessities of life that vegetables are brought a
three days' journey to be sold here. Its western wall
is flanked by a suburban thoroughfare composed of
inns, wheelwrights' and blacksmiths' shops, which,
together with food-vendors, supply all the necessities
of traveller, carter, and muleteer. Some very fine 563
temples crown the summits of the surrounding hills, and 782
parties of Tibetans riding to and fro on the Sining
road, leave offerings of silken *khada*[1] hanging to the
idols, before which their obeisance has been made.

In the first home which we visited in Pingfan we met 634
a man who was courier to a woman-magistrate of the
aboriginal tribes. Her residence was in Liencheng—
Lotus City—but she constantly visited Pingfan on

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[1] Votive scarves.

[1] [Valley of Pingfan--Analyst]

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494 few moments Dr. Kao swung himself from the saddle, and advanced to meet us with cordial and cheering words. He turned from us to the carter, who, with an abashed grin, acknowledged his presence.

'Hello, Old Sheep!' he exclaimed. 'You out of jail again? That last trip of yours turned out badly.' Then turning to us he said: 'This carter has just finished his third term of imprisonment for destruction of travellers' property, through carelessness. Whatever induced you to hire him? He'll never get in to-night. But we must do so.'

● 361 A few swift orders were then given, and the second
133 horseman galloped back to the city for help. Meanwhile as many of the party as could be crowded
494 into our own small cart drove on, while the rest proceeded on foot. The soil formation in and around Kanchow is peculiar. The city is built on a crust of earth covering underground springs. During the period when the water is still frozen the place stands firm, though buildings are thrown out of the perpendicular, but during the spring months the earth trembles and yields under the slightest pressure. On this occasion a thaw had set in, and water was welling up from below the surface, so that the condition of the roads baffles description. We picked our way cautiously over this swampy, unstable district, and where rivers intersected our path, the cart was obliged to take us over in relays. Horsemen now appeared coming to our rescue with galloping steeds, two saddled for riding and two more ready to be hitched to the carts. These fine horses, we were told, belonged to a Mongol Prince, who was staying in Doctor Kao's house.

326 It was long after sunset when we entered the great gates of Kanchow city. We passed through between the flaring smithies which always ply their trade in the

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000 these two faithful friends we had also two earnest Evangelists, who never lost an opportunity of recommending the Good News which we were there to proclaim.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CITY OF TEMPLES

241 WHEN not busy with village classes we made an
opportunity to see the sights of Kanchow, which is a
[7/2] very remarkable town. The city wall is three miles in
length, and from it a fine view of the well-irrigated,
fertile land around can be obtained. This was sown
with wheat, barley, millet, and more especially with
rice, for which this district is famous, as well as with the
opium poppy, and also peas and beans for animal
fodder. Nearer the town were numerous fruit-orchards
—pears, apricots, and apples—with vineyards which
supply the market with both black and white grapes.
[312] The amount of water which floods this district from the
melting snows is so great that many of the country
roads become shallow rivers during the summer months.
•361 Looking down into the city from the wall, one's first
346 impression is the beauty of the reed-filled lakes, and the
number of splendid trees. From the midst of these the
342 gay, glazed-tiled roofs of numerous temples appear, and
a high pagoda built in Indian style catches the eye, but
the dwelling-houses are low and insignificant. The
roofs are flat and made of mud, and the houses are all
very lightly built and obviously crooked, owing to the
boggy nature of the soil which does not allow of a sure
foundation. The largest temples and the Mission
Compound stand on the higher ground of the city,

which permits of a more solid structure than elsewhere. 361
The collapse of these mud dwelling-houses is frequent ; 346
we ourselves were roused one morning by an ominous 342
thud, and ran out just in time to see Molly, with an injured air and covered with dust, led from the ruins of her stable which had fallen down around her.

Among the temples[1] none is so highly valued by the 346
citizens as the Hall of the Sleeping Buddha. The figure 778
is one hundred and twenty feet in length, about forty 532
feet high, and is firmly believed by the Kanchow populace to be the largest image of Buddha in the world. It is made of earth and plastered with a composition of lime and paper pulp. Entirely devoid of artistic merit, it is merely a colossal figure, reclining with the head resting on the right hand, and enormous, outstretched feet with huge, round toes of regular form. A gallery runs round the upper part of the hall from which a downward view can be obtained. The city also contains a Chorten (relic tomb) about one hundred and fifty feet high, which holds the remains of a noted Living Buddha who died in the locality. The Chorten is considered to symbolise the five elements into which the body is resolved at death—earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

In another temple is a brass horse and rider of great 346
antiquity. This statue is viewed with reverence, as it 778
is believed to have been miraculously conveyed to 532
Kanchow by a great flood of the Black River. Outside 776
this temple is a splendid, bubbling spring of water, called the Ih Chuan, and said to be the first spring of sweet water to the west of the Yellow River. It feeds a tank where sacred goldfish disport themselves, and has been venerated for centuries. Close to our own residence was the beautiful Temple of the Spacious Hills. We often walked there in the evening, when the

[1] T.J.G. [at Kanchow -- Analyst]

000 through which the ordinary traveller is glad to pass quickly.

133 The aspect of the country was very different from that which we had met south of Kanchow. On the Tibetan side the snow-covered Richthofen Range came closer and closer, while the Mongolian hills gradually diminished in size until they became mere sand-dunes, and then drifted off into the flat expanse of the Gobi Desert. The style of the country presented a good deal of variety, and lay in clearly defined sections running from north to south in narrow strips. [245] Shaho, the first town of importance, was on a fertile band, and lay in the midst of orchards, in which the trees were then laden with ripe pears. Leaving these one mile behind us, we entered an area of loose sandhills, where we found it necessary to descend from our carts to lighten the weight for the animals. We plodded through the fine, dry slopes with a delightful sense of illusion that just 136 over the horizon the sea must surely appear. A number of small sand-coloured lizards sunned themselves by the way; and raising their heads at our approach, they then made off at a great pace pursued by the carter, who derived much enjoyment from catching them by the tail. Our part in the sport was to sing and whistle, which immediately brought the little creatures to a standstill, and kept them spellbound for as long as we continued our tunes. About ten miles further on we passed a clearly-defined line of swamp, through which we approached the city of Fuyi. Here the water-wagtails kept pace with the cart, and a beautiful crocus-yellow-breasted variety flitted in and out of the rushes.

[361] [712] 622 Fuyi was the smallest walled city we had seen, but stands surrounded by well-watered and prosperous farmsteads, owned by wealthy families. The hand of a

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any transition, from wastes of sand into a fertile zone, /33
in which the city of Linshui stands. We arrived there
in the evening, and after supper strolled out through the
quiet street to the canal which bordered the watered
land. Here we sat on a bank and looked down on what 000
was to us a very beautiful and a very thrilling sight. The plain was wooded, and the early autumn frosts had painted the foliage with gorgeous tints which glowed under the level rays of the setting sun. A winding river showed here and there between the trees, and we knew that, hidden among the groves, lay the city of Suchow, around which our thoughts had centred for so many months, ever since the day at Pingliang when David Törnvall had laid his finger upon the map and said: 'Here is the city which awaits your coming.'

We sat until the sun had set nor did we care to speak, so full was the mind of each, of thought concerning all we had come through, and all that yet lay before us. Gradually the darkness closed in, and by starlight we slowly walked back to the inn, our hearts beating with high courage and great confidence in God our strength and our exceeding joy.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SPRING OF WINE

ANCIENT Suchow, known as Chiuchüan—the Spring 361 •
of Wine—has vanished, having been replaced by the 563
present town which has only arisen within recent years. The destruction of the former city being caused by the last great Mohammedan rising in 1862, the new settlers enforced a regulation ordaining that no Moslem should be allowed to reside within the walls, in consequence

361 of which the eastern suburb has become the centre
563 of business with Turkestan merchants, who are all
Moslems.

On approaching the city we passed a lovely temple retaining the old title of 'the Spring of Wine.' Its grounds still contain a reedy basin wherein sparkling waters continually bubble forth.

Through the great gate we entered this eastern suburb, a far more un-Chinese settlement than anything we had hitherto seen. At the inn doors stood groups of travellers clad in wadded coats of striped cotton, with loose trousers stuffed into high leather boots. They wore a species of turban, to which they owe the Chinese name of 'Chantow,' meaning 'Bound head.' Many had brown curly beards, but several were of a fair complexion with reddish hair and beard. They spoke a language utterly unknown to us, which we learned later was Turki, and has no resemblance to Chinese.

On the stalls cotton materials were on show, hand-woven in Turkestan, with patterns and colours totally unlike Chinese goods; rugs, too, and gorgeous saddle-bags, while many a Chantow sat by great mounds of dried sultanas, apricots, and plaited strips of dried melon.

346 The dome and crescent of a whitewashed mosque[1] now
572 appeared, and as we passed its doors a crowd of young
Moslem schoolboys ran out. They had been studying Arabic and the Koran under the tuition of the 'Ahung.' All were strikingly goodlooking, but had an air of haughty arrogance never seen in Chinese scholars.

485 Every smithy was busy shoeing magnificent horses,
326 and all the inns were overflowing, the east suburb being
the halting-ground where every traveller rests himself and his beasts, provisions himself for the exacting journey ahead, and repairs his carts and changes their

[1] [In Suchow-- Analyst]

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other hand, am under the power of these influences, 776
and it would be highly dangerous for me, or for you, to take a midway position, for then we would be removed from protection, and consequently exposed to the assaults of both forces.'

The whole time of our residence in Suchow, Chang-si-yeh's pavilion remained our home, and we became much attached to it.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CHALLENGE

Our new home was situated in the best residential 361
quarter of the town. Most of the neighbouring families had beautiful gardens like our own, and between us and the western city wall stood all the most important temples, to which plantations of young trees added a great charm. The neighbourhood was quiet, and free 776
from business traffic, Suchow possessing no gate on the western side. Twenty miles distant is situated the frontier fortress of Kiayükwan, where the Great Wall ends, and of which the popular saying is: 'Kiayükwan is the West Gate of Suchow.' As the deities of wind and water (Feng shui) would be deeply insulted if the wall were pierced, the inhabitants of Suchow would be terrified at such an action, fearing the destruction of the city by flood.

Our first walk was to a temple standing in large 778
grounds, and approached by a splendid poplar avenue. We were discussing, as we proceeded, the details of the new life ahead, when our eyes were riveted by an inscription over the temple door, hanging between two

morass) the whole of the party made its way on foot to 474
a wretched hovel, where on the damp ground, amidst
indescribable dirt, we spent the night. Incidentally, 484
we discovered that we were expected at this house; and that the carter was smuggling illicit goods to his friends under cover of our tracts. The next day the mules were changed for oxen. 'There are rivers ahead,' said the man, in a confidential whisper; 'nothing like oxen for crossing water. This, my nephew, (here he indicated a lad of about sixteen) 'understands the fords thoroughly, and he will now take you on for the rest of the way.'

Knowing there could be no danger from rivers at this season of the year, but feeling that we might, at this rate, never reach our destination at all, we accepted the new arrangement, trusting 'Welcome Home' to see us safely through; and late that afternoon, in a snowstorm, we reached Kinta.

It proved to be an interesting place, colonised two 361 •
hundred years ago by people from Taiyüanfu, in 166
Shansi, and though small, yet from its position on well-watered land of large extent, it is a place of importance.

The Golden Tower, from which Kinta takes its name, 346
is in Indian style, as are also many of the temple 177
frescoes and wooden idols of the cities north-west of
Kanchow, showing that at one time Indian art had 532
strongly imprinted its mark in the Province of Kansu. The dome of the tower is said to have originally been covered with pure gold, which was stripped off by the Moslems and replaced by brass; and this having in turn been stolen, the whole tower was subsequently whitewashed, as it is to-day.

In the spring the temples all hold separate festivals 796
in honour of their respective gods, and we were in 776
Kinta when the *Cheng Wang* (protective deity of the

202 responsible for the weight of his pack, and he was overheard to say: 'If it were not for those Christians my load would be light! If I am not carrying books for them, then it is letters; and if they have no letters, 361 then it is books!' The far-distant barking of dogs sometimes warns us of an encampment,[1] and we can just catch the gleam of the fire glowing like a jewel in the velvet darkness. In the daytime the low, sand-coloured tents are indistinguishable from the universal tawny shade of the ground, and being pegged down very low they seem to melt into the general outlines.

000 We took the journey very slowly, stopping at each little walled town or village, to hold meetings, visit the homes, and distribute Christian literature. Three days brought us to the city of Chikinpu. Had we been choosing its name, however, we should have called it 'Pain Sec,' in memory of a certain little place in the Rhone Valley, where the bread is said to be made only three times a year. At Chikinpu the date for baking must surely have been near, for the bread we ate was certainly three months old! The kindness and hospitality with which we were received were most refreshing and greatly added to our enjoyment of the trip. Here we also met a gentleman who had been one of the Suchow enquirers, but whose officials duties had now brought him to this far-off spot. Through his courtesy, on arrival we found our inn rooms already engaged, and in one of these the unusual luxury of a table and two chairs. He told us an interesting incident which had naturally much impressed him. Many years previously, in witness of a vow, he had set up a tablet in one of the shrines of a famous rock temple a few miles away from Chikinpu. Quite recently, hearing he was again in the neighbourhood, the priest-in-charge had hurried down in alarm to inform him that the tablet had unaccount-

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[1] [Between Kiayükuan and Yümen—Analyst]

361 312 The appearance of the town[1] is not very different from others of the Gobi border, except for its unusual gate, of which the inhabitants are almost unduly proud. It stands in a well-watered belt, and the land is cultivated right up to the city wall. We reached it through a sea of mud, as irrigation was in progress, and in accordance with the careless custom of the Kansu agriculturalist the stream, not being required on the land, had been turned off and allowed to flow down the main road.

000 We spent several busy, happy days there, as the people were particularly interested and listened willingly. On the morning of our departure, as we left the inn, an old woman pulled one of us by the sleeve in a mysterious manner, and whispered : 'A word about those things that have been lost!' We wondered, what things? Could it be that she had information of our own lost parcel of books, and a sheepskin coat dropped by one of the carters? Seeing our look of interest, the old crone was emboldened to go on with her story. 'You are "Holy Women"; you know secret things, hidden things, things that we cannot divine. Will you, please, tell me before you go, *the name of the thief who stole my cow?*'

361 133 Thirty-five miles further on is Pulungki, a city that once must have held at least fifty thousand inhabitants, but which now is nothing but scattered ruins, a few poor inns, and an encircling wall of immense area. During the next few nights we counted ten more deserted towns and villages, and no words can adequately convey the extraordinary sensations evoked by crossing in the moonlight, or in the uncertain pallor of dawn, these abodes of the past, whose deserted streets are sometimes still clearly defined, and where abandoned houses, with yawning doorways, stand tenantless on either side. From dateless ages the Gobi Desert has approached

[1] [YUmen -- Analyst]

361 133 with stealthy steps; moving, like some sluggish organism, till with soft, hungry lips it has seized its prey and absorbed it; and then, replete and satisfied, has lain down triumphant. The surrounding scene is of an unspeakably desolate character, reminding one of a landscape in the moon, only that instead of extinct craters, here are dead and forgotten cities, towns, and villages.

173 All sorts of legends are told about this region.[1] Pulungki is said to have been the original Eden of the human race; any amount of buried treasures lie concealed in caves underneath the soil; demons haunt the whole neighbourhood; a hole in the ground with steps leading down may mean a robber's den, or, on the other hand, it may be the entrance to some Arabian Night's grotto, piled with glittering stones!

Circumstantial stories of such discoveries were told us. Men, whose names were known, had dug into such a hoard, and by the flare of torches had actually seen the booty, but when they were just on the point of seizing it, a rush of wings had passed overhead, throwing the searchers violently to the earth, and filling them with such terror that to escape with their lives was all they could hope for. Bats? No, not bats, they were too far in for that; besides, the cave had never been opened within the memory of man! Again, one party of excavators entering the far recesses of another subterranean shaft, had seen, to their amazement, a faint glimmer of light. Drawing near they had found a tiny oil lamp burning—a mere speck of flame, but undoubtedly of human origin, as there was a wick, which wick was fed from some enormous vat of vegetable oil, the supply of which had been sufficient to keep the light going for centuries! And to convince us of the truth of these assertions, we were shown certain remarkable,

[1] [Between Yumen and Tunhwang—Analyst]

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
AF13 Northwest China AF13

010 bid her farewell, before she would permit the sacred words to pass her lips she washed her face and combed her thin hair, feeling it to be disrespectful to the One True God to address Him unprepared. Such a soul as this, met with on the road of life, one can never forget. She was ripe for the Call ; and she heard it, and was glad.

361 The next city is Ansi, which also bids fair to disappear under the encroaching sands, as these have
133 already drifted round it as high as the top of the wall.
It is a cold, storm-swept place, exposed on every side,
and with neither coal nor wood obtainable. The wind
132 is said to blow every day in the year, but in the winter
512 it is so fiercely terrible that all shops are closed, and
733 everything is at a standstill. Every household then
lives, eats, and sleeps on its dung-warmed *kang*, nor is it
surprising that so many while away the weary hours
with the fumes of the opium-pipe. Ansi lies at the
487 cross-roads, where the great track from Suchow turns
off towards Hami and Eastern Turkestan, meeting also
the main road to the Oasis of Tunhwang, four stages
to the south-west. The fame of Tunhwang had already
172 reached us. We had entertained at Suchow a party of
American archaeologists from Harvard University, who had recently been there for the purpose of seeing its art treasures. Not being able, however, to fulfil their purpose, they were returning to Peking, carrying away a rather unfortunate impression of the Tunhwang population, and they warned us that we should find them turbulent and somewhat rough-spoken. This did not alarm us, however, as our search was for treasure of a different kind, which called for excavation of another, and less obvious nature.

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
AF13 Northwest China AF13

484 last watch before dawn dragged itself slowly out. There was no telegraph wire to cheer us, there being no line to Tunhwang, so we were dependent for guidance on a landmark erected at each half-stage, and which by daylight was visible for many miles. At last our carter stopped at a tiny hut; the men thundered on the door until an old woman opened it, and in a few minutes a crackling wood fire restored life and hope, as we stood round it in the little hovel reeking with opium fumes. Presently the old dame, seeing how perished we were with cold, threw a handful of dried leaves into a pot of boiling water, and ladled us out an infusion, in whose restorative powers she professed the greatest belief. It may have been the herb, or the fire, or her kindness, or perhaps the combination of all three, but most certainly we were presently able to go on our way with new strength.

It took us six hours to reach the gates of Tunhwang, and in the bitter cold of the hour before sunrise we were fortunate enough to pick up a bundle of straw, dropped from a peasant's cart, to which we set light,
361 and after warming ourselves, went on invigorated. All
245 round the city are large orchards of a park-like character, watered by rushing streams, and planted with thousands of trees, a great proportion being pear trees, for the fruit of which the place is celebrated. The early frosts had already touched the leaves, and the whole scene
776 was ablaze as with golden flames. It was the fourteenth day of the eighth moon (October 1st), the eve of the
782 Moon Festival, when offerings of every description of fruit are made to that luminary, and the street stalls were piled with 'moon cakes,' apples, grapes and nectarines—an attractive spectacle to us after our weary journey.

000 The geographical position of the city is such as to

The geographical position of the city is such as to render it a very important centre, standing as it does 487
where roads from Lhasa, Mongolia, India and South
Siberia all converge. Merchants from Khotan, Yarkand 494
and Kashgar travel this way, and it is not infrequent to meet a caravan of sixty donkeys which have travelled fifty days over the southern border of the Takla-Makan desert. Tunhwang is a town which has, 175
under various names, taken an important place in the history of the territory now known as North-West Kansu. In 165 B.C. there is record of its inhabitants being overcome in battle, and dispersed, reappearing later as the Indo-Scythians of the Punjab. Its more ancient name was Shachow—City of the Sands—and it is frequently marked by this name, on maps, at the present time. In A.D. 400 it was the capital of the State of Western Liang. It has been held by Tibetans, and used by the Chinese as an extreme outpost of defence against the Huns. Documents in the Indian, Khoroshti and Brahmi scripts had been excavated in the district, as well as in an unknown script resembling Aramaic.

Of the original city nothing now remains but a 361
ruined wall, and an enclosure mostly cultivated by 563
market-gardeners. In its stead has grown up a smaller town, on the opposite side of the river, the eastern suburb of which has become the business quarter, and is chiefly occupied by Moslem Turkis, who are now gradually possessing themselves of the land, so that it is common to see the scarlet dress and fluttering veil of the Moslem women at work in the fields. The reason 733
for this change in the population is not far to seek, 563
opium and its deadly influences being the cause. Rich and poor, old and young, farmers, tradesmen and artisans are all neglecting their employment for the opium-pipe, and it is freely admitted that the people

543 Our meals were somewhat of a problem in this happy
265 valley.[1] Each party brought its own picnic-basket, and
the food-vendors only supplied titbits such as lumps of
fat fried pork, apricot tea, and fermented rice-water.
000 Our bag of bread was already finished, and the only
food our men could make was flour mixed with oil,
pulled out into long strips, nipped into small chunks,
and boiled in water, and this meal we shared with them
once a day, but still found ourselves craving for some
form of bread. We were greatly delighted, therefore,
when a little girl appeared with a home-steamed
roll in her hand, and said: 'I have no money,
but will you give me a gospel in exchange for this?'
Finding that we were willing to do so, bread and new-laid
eggs were afterwards frequently brought by
children.

In spite of considerable forethought we had left Suchow for this long trip with a but poorly furnished store-box. Months before, we had written in several directions for needed supplies, but owing to the disturbed condition of China, all had failed us, and we were thankful to have enough tea in hand to allow ourselves a fresh brew once a day. Of the certainty of our daily ration we had no question, but beyond this many luxuries were supplied through the kindness of casual acquaintances. The old guardian at the Temple of the Red Hill, after we had sat and talked awhile with him, brought us back through his garden, and cut the best of his vegetables for us, while 'Lydia' also came down with a present of rice steamed with jujube fruit. On one occasion a resourceful student went out foraging for food and brought us back a dozen new-laid pheasants' eggs.

● 311 To the direct north lay a place called Hwahaitz, an extensive oasis covered with large farms. Since our

000 [1] [Near Chikinpu at a fair—Analyst]

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China AF13
~~Sinkiang AI 1.~~

waddling of a small bear, but in flight they were 136
superb.

It was not until after sunset that we drew near the 800
first farm of the Hwahaitz oasis. The Suchow enquirer came out to meet us, and we found a room prepared for our use. The *kang* had been covered with a length of white cloth; a kitchen with firewood was at our disposal, and a meal was being prepared. But we were too tired to sit up and eat it, and securing a cup of tea, we lay down and promptly fell asleep.

We were up early, but not before the crowd had begun to assemble in the courtyard. After a breakfast of pancakes made of flour into which oil had been kneaded, and which we dipped into vinegar, we went out to see the place. The gates of the walled enclosure in which we were staying were already decorated with Christian posters, and the students were out choosing a suitable site for the tent.

The name of the place signifies 'The Flowery Lake.' 133
The lake, however, after which it is named, proved to be 361 ●
but a small pond in which naked children disported 241
themselves, and where the beasts of the local farmers 312
were brought to be watered. The oasis is circular, large, and extremely fertile. The roads were bordered with poplar and willow trees, and the fields were sown with wheat, millet and flax. We followed the high bank of an irrigation canal, and passed the entrances of several large, prosperous and beautiful farmhouses.
The locality is very hot by day, but exceedingly cold at [132]
night; at sunset the air hummed with mosquitoes, [136]
which, however, only lived a couple of hours before succumbing to the night chill.

We returned to find the site chosen, and the tent 000
pitched. Larger crowds gathered even than at Chikinpu, and the sales of gospels were most remarkable.

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China AF13
~~Sinkiang AI-1~~

house had proved to bring a blessing, so we were 485
welcomed accordingly. On one occasion, to our joy 572
the innkeeper's wife assured us that she had never
once touched the opium-pipe since our last visit, for we 000
had told her distinctly that this *must* go if she would serve God. Then, too, the stages seemed easier, from the fact of their familiarity, as we now knew when to look out for a deserted city, or a clump of trees, or a rushing stream, or a sandy waste. We passed with even more wonder than formerly the site of the buried city of Pulungki, and marvelled once again that so extensive a town could have been recaptured by the Gobi till from being a busy habitation of men it had become the haunt of wolves.

There is a certain ancient river-bed a few miles out 313
from Santaokow, which must hold some considerable underground water supply, since groves of fine trees border it, among which was a large-leafed willow growing to the size and shape of an English oak. The villagers had also effected an arboreal experiment there which was new to us, for we saw large plantations of young willows grafted with poplar, and they told us that by this means they produced a very useful tree, having the quick-growing properties of the willow together with the superior wood of the poplar.

As on former occasions our journeys were taken by 484
night, but being midsummer the hours of darkness were brief, and we had the benefit of a long evening as well as of an early dawn, which enabled us to take more
note of our surroundings. Ansi seemed more deeply [361] ●
submerged in the encroaching sands than even before. [133]
One more winter of sandstorms had passed over it, and its population bore the impress of yet another winter of opium indulgence. Our inn rooms seemed more than usually gloomy and filthy, while over the

is dreary beyond words. The visit of a traveller is 494
their only touch with the outer world, and though in ordinary times and at certain seasons the caravans pass to and fro in large numbers, yet there are many months of wintry weather when there is scarcely a human being on the road. No wonder, then, that their[1] most valued 733
possession is the harvest reaped from the field of opium, which supplies them with their sole luxury of life. Here, as in every other place, we visited each family, sat 000
with them, talked with them, proclaimed Christ as Saviour and King, and on leaving saw to it that each family had now some Christian literature, which we hoped would be read during the long and dreary Gobi winter days and nights. Also before we left Petuntz we had an interesting interview with the man whose life we had saved. We found him to be only twenty-eight years of age, a native of Hangchow in Shensi, very well educated, and also that he had with him sufficient money for all his expenses, having come to 'Kow Wai' hoping to secure a good post. His gratitude to our party knew no bounds, and the villagers kept reiterating to him how lucky he was to have been picked up, as during these weeks when the roads were almost deserted, already several pedestrians had been found dead from thirst.

We left at sunset for the next stage, which was to 133
Hungliuyüan—'The Park of Tamarisks'—a charm- 491
ing though deceptive name, and we reached it over ground which by night could have been mistaken for snowfields, the alkali deposit lying in a thick crust on the surface and making it soft and spongy. There 361 ●
were only four souls in Hungliuyüan, namely, one man employed as courier by the post-office, and a woman and her two sons. Of the three inns, two had been 485
abandoned by their owners, who found they could make

[1] [Residents of Petuntz--Analyst]

5: Tafel--239 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet
Inner Mongolia AH 6
N.W. China AF13

M 133 shore. (1)

1. I often measured the amount of mud present in one cubic meter of water from the Hwang Ho and found that it averaged close to six kilograms; after a day of rain in Bau de tschou I even obtained 6.9 kilograms per cubic meter.

M 578 /146/ I reached Lanchow fu on November 4, after having had to travel on the last day only through the large loess-filled valley basin of this city. On the night before there was a final scene which I shall not withhold from my readers for it seems to me characteristic for the way of living, the thoughts and aspirations of the poor Kansu people. It had grown late by the time we reached the town of Hsiao ho kou. And it had cost me considerable effort to succeed in having a gate opened. When I had finally found shelter at a small inn, a fight broke out which looked serious to me. Women scolded and shouted and two old Chinese fathers pulled each other's pigtails and tried to knock one another down, trampling and kicking. Even though the yard where I had left my animals was only 8 meters by 8 meters large and on each of two sides there was only a low small house of three sections /kien/, yet the hotel was run by two parties. And I had nine animals! The two owners had disagreed as to who was to feed the ninth animal and pocket the small amount of money for straw (about 25 pfennig). When they finally separated, one of them pulled one of my nags over to his side by its halter while the other held on to the animal's tail. No amount of persuasion on my part had any effect and yet I did not care to play the part of Solomon and pronounce judgment!

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CHAPTER IV

/147/ In Kansu and on the Border of Tibet

C
● 361 631 491 Lanchow fu is the capital of the province of Kansu. And whenever a man from Kansu told me about his Lanchow fu and all about the cost of flour and bread, tobacco and liquor in the city, he always told of the wonder of the world to be found there, namely, the pontoon bridge across the great Yellow River. "You foreigners surely have nothing like that," I was assured. "There is nothing like it under heaven."

[text continues on p. 241]

it under heaven." 361

The common people usually call the city of Lanchow fu, Gao lan hsien, after the title of the sub-prefect or head of the district (hsien) who has his seat there and who chiefly deals with the people. (1) The city lies close to the right bank of the Hwang Ho where the latter narrows down for a short distance to a width of only 250 meters. There is no other place up and down the river where there is a similarly favorable spot for crossing over. 631

Each winter at this place the Yellow River is frozen over for at least one and one-half months, so that even heavily-laden freight wagons can drive across. The opening of this natural bridge which took place toward the end of December was always a great festival occasion and was celebrated with great pomp. First of all the Gao lan hsien as fu mu kwan, i. e., father-mother-mandarin, as the patriarchally-minded Chinese calls his district chief, had to drive over the ice in his gala carriage, accompanied by a large retinue, in order to prove that the ice was safe. On the other hand, in fall and spring when the ice broke up, river traffic was often blocked for days or weeks. One could, perhaps, at the risk of one's life cross the raging stream between the ice floes on a raft of goat-skin bags. But in the spring when the ice had disappeared, the famous pontoon bridge, the afore-mentioned wonder of the world, was set up at the expense of the provincial government. Twenty-two box-shaped wide boats of poplar wood were held together with heavy iron chains and especially with thick hemp ropes, as may be seen on Plate XXXIV. On top of these were laid unfinished planks, but so unevenly that one seldom dared ride across on horseback. Everywhere there were large holes, everywhere the planks rocked and tipped. The wooden railing, too, was more to look at than to lean on. Even Europeans regarded the bridge as a wonder of the world, but only /148/ to 133 481 527 491

1. This post of Gao lan hsien was supposed to be a very busy one but poorly paid. These officials were therefore usually transferred to a good sinecure after a year. If they knew how to make a good impression on their superiors and relieve them of a great deal of work, they usually got Tsin tschou in the following year. I heard of a mandarin who three times changed over from one of these posts to the other, i. e., in one year he had to supplement his salary, whereas in the next, his earnings were very good. [661]

● 361 363 The city of Lanchow fu does not cover a large area (see my cartographic conclusions Part I, sheet 27). The actual city has narrow streets with an unspeakably worn-down pavement in which whole stone slabs were missing, which no one repaired, so that I always considered it the greatest agony to go riding in one of the two-wheel carriages without springs. However, it was considered good form among the Chinese to make calls inside the city in a carriage. One sat on one's haunches on a thin cushion, tensely clutched the wooden railing on either side of the carriage and looked out on the street through a black, veil-like curtain. One's head was hurled alternately against either sides of the carriage as happens in our country when the coachman, in driving through an entrance gate /151/ awkwardly drives over the curb, except that here, of course, it happened continually. No wonder the Chinese mandarins often felt that 100 strokes of the stick were not enough for a delinquent. Every time one drove out in a carriage, one got 100 such vigorous blows for each 100 meters. At the same time, the streets were so narrow that two carriages could pass one another only with difficulty. (1) Thus it required a great deal of patience to view traffic and venture forth on a pleasure drive.

361 The city is very thickly built up, with very small yards between houses which are all one-storied. Only the various administrative buildings cover larger areas; that of the governor-general and that of the treasurer of the province are surrounded by attractive parks. On the south, east and west of the actual city of Lanchow fu there are large suburbs, also walled, which are covered with houses up to the very last property. Nevertheless, along with various other people who are acquainted with the city, I estimate that it has only 100,000 or at most, 120,000 inhabitants. (2)

1. Meanwhile I heard that the government is considering macadamizing the main streets which have heretofore been merely paved. But since the Chinese do not know much about repair, this will improve matters for only a short time, no doubt.

2. Kreitner, Im fernen Osten estimates the population at half a million. Rockhill, The Land of the Lamas thinks there are 70,000-80,000; Grenard 76,000; Bell believes there are 40,000 houses; Richard, Comprehensive

N.W. China AF13

> Geography of the Chinese Empire, 1908, believes there are 500,000 inhabitants; Filchner, Bilder aus Kansu, 1912: 300,000-400,000 inhabitants. The high figures are improbable if only because, according to the census of 1910, all of Kansu has only about 4,000,000 inhabitants and according to the census of 1831 the whole district had only 468,000 souls. 361

Lanchow fu's chief source of revenue is its tobacco industry. The so-called Lanchow schui yen, that is, the water-pipe tobacco which is greenish in color, bites the tongue and is very finely cut, almost pulverized for the trade, is manufactured here. The Chinese value it very highly and it has for years been shipped far south, to Szechwan and the Yangtze Valley. On the outskirts of the city, in fields irrigated by means of large wooden water wheels (Plate XXXI), practically only tobacco is raised. (3) It is a species that I did not see 249 439

> 3. Besides tobacco, some rice and cotton, poppies, wheat, etc., were planted; only on the Hwang Ho bank and on the islands did groves of pears and peaches, and jujubes and grapes cover a large area.

farther south, with broad, thick, dark green and shiny leaves. In the fall the plants are very carefully pulled out of the ground and dried under straw coverings so that they keep their green color. There are about 20 large hang (manufactories) besides 70 small ones. In these all kinds of other ingredients are added to the tobacco and with the addition of a great deal of hung ma (linseed oil) the leaves are hammered together and pressed into cubes one to two cubic meters in size. At certain times one sees strong workmen everywhere along the streets working in 16-hour shifts, cutting up such cubes with a long plane. The commercial value in the city alone was 2,000,000-3,000,000 marks.

For years there was also a mechanical cloth-weaving industry in Lanchow fu, which had been established in the '70s by the great viceroy Tso ts'ung /152/ and was run by four Germans. But the Chinese officials who supervised it stole so much that it was given up as unprofitable more than 20 years ago. 288

Because of its location the city is, of course, also a center of transit trade. Wooden rafts consisting of several layers of beams are built here on the Hwang Ho out of wood from Tao tschou. Several 501

529 place for the wealthier class of Lanchow fu. During the season there the Chinese ladies are entertained with theater and festivals. There are /159/ woods on the slopes between the cliffs and a little mountain brook gushes merrily out of a narrow ravine. The Kansu know, as well as we do, where it is pleasant to be.

133 Beyond Kin hsien I was obliged, on the following days, to cross this rocky mountain range, the Hsin lu Shan, the continuation of the Kwan Shan which earlier travelers had pointed out and which is made up of granite and chalk and sandstone rich in coal seams. Loess masses cover the slopes far up; but here, too, the peaks are free of this yellow, ugly covering. But at a height of 2,800 meters I had not yet got beyond the haze and dust which had enveloped the mountains and valleys in a blue atmosphere for one and one-half months now since the end of October when last it rained, or rather snowed. Every day the sky was cloudless; but visibility was so limited that the horizon and all the outlines of the mountains were indistinct. Behind, that is, southwest of these mountains - they form only a narrow chain like theater wings - one comes to the basin of the subprefecture Di dao tschou and into the environs of the Tao Ho, one of the most important tributaries of the Hwang Ho. In this basin, too, there is loess everywhere, but it is not very thick (about 40 centimeters). Below it there are soon to be found red tertiary and mostly horizontal layers of clay of huge proportions. These have molded the hilly and mountainous landscape of today and formed the valley which is several kilometers wide at the city of Di dao.

361 ● 487 Di dao tschou belongs to the good cities of Kansu. It has possibly 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants, tobacco manufacturing establishments, many lumber companies connected with the spruce forests of the southern mountains, and is connected with Lanchow by a highway leading over the Kwan Shan. (1) Two important roads lead south from here and to the province of Szechwan, one over Min tschou and the other over Kung tschang fu.

1. Part of the mountain range Hsin lu Shan, just described. As we mentioned earlier, the Chinese does not name mountain chains but only mountain peaks.

63 563 The city of Di dao is already on the border of China. The Tibetans appear as a new element among the Chinese and Mohammedans. A Tibetan prince lives in the city itself, the so-called kia (pronounced dia) or tiao tu se (2) who has his own subjects. In the district of

2. T'u se or t'u sse (not to be confused with tu se or du se,

from the Chinese way, but the clothes of the men were different. They preferred small octagonal blue, white or black caps and long garments which were worn like a caftan. It became more and more evident in all the faces we saw that foreign blood predominated here. The color of their skin had grown lighter. More and more often I saw red cheeks, brownish mustaches which were trimmed somewhat, hooked and somewhat narrower noses, eyelids with an at least horizontal axis and a much more pronounced arcus superciliaris than in the Mongolian type. The region around Ho tschou is densely populated; countless villages are scattered all over and in all of them the Mohammedans strongly predominate. (1) And no wonder! For I was now nearing the stronghold of Mohammedanism in China proper. What stories the Chinese soldiers who escorted me knew about the towns along the way and the year 1895 when the Hui hui had rebelled! What hair-raising deeds had been committed on both sides! Whenever they fell into each other's hands, no matter what age or what sex, they killed one another. Whole communities were exterminated. The rebellious bands of Mohammedan farmers moved along from village to village. But the leading mullahs acted thoughtlessly. Their troops were so poorly armed that even smaller town walls stood firm if they were half-way decently defended. 563 [361] 563 579

It is astonishing that there are still so many Mohammedans in existence after all the rebellions which were always quelled amid rivers of blood. /161/ When I approached the city of Ho tschou itself I thought I was in a Mohammedan country. From the tops of the many minarets the muezzins were calling the hour of prayer. Well-spoken Arabic syllables reached my ear; countless old mosques /dscha mu (Arabic-Chinese)/ stood among groups of beautiful trees and many bearded mullahs without pigtails moved about in the throng. 563 779

1. Today no Mohammedans are permitted to live in and around the city of Di dao tschou; their settlements begin on the other side of the Tao Ho. On the way from Di dao to Ho tschou I saw many goiters, otherwise North China does not have many cases of it. Goiters begin to appear in the valleys of the Tsin ling, and in certain places there they are so frequent that almost every adult and especially all women carry around such an appendage.

● 361 701 563 Today the city of Ho (1) tschou itself consists mainly of the southern suburb of Nan kwan. That is where the mosques and the large Mohammedan shops are. The actual city of Ho tschou, on the other hand, is pure Chinese. The Mohammedans are forbidden, under penalty of death, to live inside the city. There are always many hundreds of soldiers garrisoned on the city wall (Plate XXXVI), and one finds there stables for the horses of officers and men. The wall is kept in excellent repair. But since not very many Chinese live here, there are large areas inside the walls that are deserted. All the life goes on outside. There we find closely built-up streets, for the most part with two-story houses as in Di dao, surrounded by a wall which today is destroyed. I estimate that Ho tschou proper and its suburb has a population of 30,000 and of these over two-thirds are Mohammedans. (2) There is not another city within the 18 provinces of the Chinese empire that has a similarly strong Moham-
771 medan aspect. And yet there are many things that are entirely
[782] different here from other genuinely Mohammedan countries. In Ho tschou and environs I never saw a Hui hui who spread out his prayer rug in a courtyard or out in the open to pray when the muezzins (3) called out. The Ho tschou Mohammedans, like the ones that have become still more Chinese, are very superficial in their religion and can scarcely execute the prescribed ablutions without making a mistake. It seldom happens that one of them makes a pilgrimage to Mecca. Only a few of them even know the name of the city. Most of them only know about "Kerbe" (4) and that this is a place

1. Pronounced like H'e with a very sharp guttural sound.

2. The entire district is said to have had 85,526 families, according to the census of 1831.

3. The muezzins like the mullahs are always called ah'un in Kansu. The word comes from East Turkish where ăhon means the scholar. Even these Ahun are not always circumcized. Most Chinese Mohammedans do not know anything about circumcision.

4. Kaaba, the cubiform holy of holies in the mosque at Mecca.

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into Ngolok country. Thus the ting of Hsün hoa is one of the largest districts in Kansu and in China, but Chinese influence in it is extremely slight.

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My way to Hsün at first led along a little stream on which the city of Ho tschou is situated, up an alluvial valley which is several kilometers wide. For many hours I traveled along it between the mountains of loess. At first the road was alive with many people and horsemen. There were also countless villages, just as China proper, hidden between extensive groups of trees. Out of the thick bluish-white haze of the loess country in which I at first still found myself, gradually rocky and high, snow-covered mountain peaks began to emerge. The mountains around me also became higher, more and more chains rose up out of the loess landscape. In front of me beyond the loess hills of about 2,200 meters altitude, the Tai tse Shan arose steep and bold, and many other chains, all of which again indicated a northwest-southeast strike, followed close behind. I stood at the edge of the Tibetan highlands. The way grew lonelier, villages became scarcer, copses began. The inhabitants looked stranger and were dressed more gaily in each new village, more and more red was worn. Around the dwellings white flags fluttered merrily on tall masts. By the roadside stood brightly-painted houses, monastery buildings and monumental tschorten (stupa); ethnographically-speaking we had also reached Tibet. On the second day beyond Ho tschou I crossed a high pass, the Dar di La(Sinicized: Da tse Shan), 3,490 meters. Countless stones, especially white quartz fragments had been gathered together on the highest point of this pass and formed something that resembled our Alpine "stone man." Out of this pile of stones loomed sticks with many scraps of cloth on which there were inscriptions and with tufts of wool. It was the first Tibetan lab tse or obo (3), a shrine dedicated to the mountain

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3. Pronounced lab tse, written lap rtse (according to Chandra Das, Tibetan-English Dictionary). Obo is Mongolian but is used by the border Chinese along with the word schan schen ta (literally: tower of the mountain spirit).

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spirits. We met many Tibetans on that mountain and especially many Tibetan women, on foot and dressed in rags. In spite of the

5: Tafel--278   T-3   (1905-1908) 1914   AJ1 Tibet AJ1
N.W. China AF13

T 133 In the region of the Hsining River we again traveled between loess-covered red clay mountains to the town of Ping tschung yi and then through the so-called Hsiao hsia (small gorge), both of them places where in the last Mohammedan war there were bloody clashes.

C 797 361 On December 25, I was in the city of Hsining fu. I soon found a pretty, albeit dirty, but at any rate homey inn, and that evening I could already spend with Mr. and Mrs. Ridley, the English missionaries of the China Inland Mission, to whom so many Tibetan travelers are indebted. With two boys of five and three years and their adorable little daughter who was then six months old, the courageous couple were again living all alone among the Chinese in the rude frontier town in which they already in 1895 lived through the terrible four-month siege by the Mohammedans. The last European whom Mr. and Mrs. Ridley had seen, had come through Hsining fu a half year before. I found a large Christmas tree in their simple Chinese house, and on that evening I was even permitted to appear as "Grandfather Christmas" with a long white beard, with a stick and a rod and a well-filled sack, and help give the children the type of Christmas celebrated in their homeland. I would not have dreamed of all this on the night before when in the pitch dark I was still sitting on my pony in a temperature of 15° and in a dry, biting mountain wind, until I finally found a hut on the gates of which we had to knock for a long time before we were admitted.

C 727 Of course, nothing had changed in Hsining fu since I had left it in November 1904 together with Mr. and Mrs. Filchner. Chinese cities probably do not change much anyway. There was meantime only the small war that was taking place on the Hwang Ho below the city of Kue de ting and the city had not yet calmed down during the first few days after my arrival. An anxiously-awaited execution order had just arrived from Peking and, at the imperial command, a few leaders of the hostile party, an aristocratic Salar and a few Tibetan chiefs and lamas were now being beheaded just outside the west gate. This was a big event because of the importance of the persons. Many people had gathered from far and near for this performance and the soldiers who were in charge of the execution were very frightened. They purposely walked back and forth excitedly while the preparations were going on and meanwhile one of them on whom the executioner's sword had heretofore not been seen, knocked off all the heads in such a way that no one could tell who actually did it.

N.W. China AFU3

There is not much to be said about the city of Hsining fu. It is 361 a Chinese city like all the others. And if one wants to be honest, one must admit that in the entire huge Middle Kingdom there is not a single really beautiful private dwelling. Hsining fu has only a "beautiful" city wall; and this is very necessary. As I briefly mentioned before, the city endured a four-month siege as recently as 1895, /170/ and about this Mr. Ridley once reported in detail in an English journal. Because of the lack of wood in the vicinity, the houses are small and low and built largely of dried loam with flat roofs. The number of inhabitants today probably does not quite come to 20,000. (1) Two-thirds of the male population are said to 624

> 1. Count Széchenyi: 3,000 occupied houses and 35,000 inhabitants; Rockhill, The Land of the Lamas, 1891: 30,000 -40,000 inhabitants. But this was before the last but one rebellion which was particularly bloody. Hedin, Durch Asiens Wüsten, Vol. II mentions 20,000 inhabitants, basing his figure on Ridley's statement; Grenard gives 15,000 inhabitants in the inner city, 10,000 Mohammedans in the suburb; Prschewalski, Reisen in Tibet, 1884: 60,000 inhabitants; Futterer, Durch Asien, Vol. I, p. 257, 1901: 60,000 inhabitants; therefore also Sievers, Asien, 1904, p. 491: 60,000 inhabitants; Filchner, Bilder aus Kansu, 1912: 60,000 inhabitants; Richard's Geography, Shanghai 1908: 60,000 inhabitants. The number 20,000 was quoted to me in the Hsien yamen, on the basis of the almost annual inquiries officially conducted around New Year. It is interesting to compare these figures with the impressions Tibetans have of the city. Chandra Das in his Contributions on Tibet gives the report of the Panschen Lama of the year 1779. He estimates the number of inhabitants of Hsining to be 300,000. According to the report from the crown of the ministry of the interior dated February 27, 1911, there were 2,032 families counted in the census of 1910, which would equal not even 10,000 souls. However, this figure does not represent the inhabitants of Hsining but the Mongolian banners that come under the Hsining amban.

be employed in the countless official bureaus or are soldiers or secretaries and secretaries' assistants. There is also a prince, a tu

701 712 In Haining fu there was a "middle," "left," "right," "front," and "rear" ying, each of which was under a du se, or more often under schu be. They were very poorly armed. The troops almost never drilled. Each month the soldiers were given a goodly ration of wheat and four marks pay. By far the majority of them were married.

[714] Outside the city there was a fortified encampment of so-called bu tui (allegedly modern drilled infantrymen) which was under the direct command of the general, and these men had better uniforms and were armed with muzzle-loaders. As long as I was in Hsining fu the officers did not hand out modern guns from the arsenals, partly for reasons of economy, partly for safety's sake, for often the soldiers deserted taking their guns with them and then selling them to the secret societies or to the Mohammedans.

the dao tai and also the highest official in the city, the ts'ing tsch'ai da tsch'en, that is the imperial minister in residence /172/ or, in short, the amban to whom North Tibet is subject (1), - all of these

1. The official title of this official is: tsung li tsch'ing hai sche wu da tsch'en, that is, minister and military attaché of the entire Koko Nor district. He was always a Manchu and had a position equal in rank with that of the viceroy of Lanchow. He is always given the title of amban or Seling amban, i.e., Hsining minister, by the Tibetans and Mongols. The office was created in 1723 for the Mongolian banners. The Tibetans call Hsining "Seling" or "Siling mkar."

have a separate arsenal in connection with their yamen, so that in the siege of 1895 each of them could arm his own men and send them up on the city walls. Besides that, there are a considerable 361 [344] number of other official buildings in the city. A great deal of room is taken up by large guild houses, especially those of the Shensi merchants, and by the ordinary state temples and the schools. Since large areas within the city are not built up and consist of fields which are so extensive that several times I was able to shoot wild pheasants on them for my dinner, it will be understandable that most travelers have overrated the population of the city. Even though the Chinese live close together, they nevertheless always have only one-story houses with spacious yards. 361

According to my observations, Hsining fu is 2,300 meters above sea level, while Hedin estimated only 2,265 meters, Grenard 2,250 meters and Filchner, on the other hand, by far the highest figure, namely, 2,380 meters. It lies in the middle of a flat alluvial valley, two kilometers wide, the floor of which can be irrigated, which fact determines the relative wealth of the inhabitants and above all the great cheapness of food supplies. The spot where the city stands 361 has again, of course, been very cleverly selected from a strategic 487 and economic point of view, namely, just below the point from which two broad-bottomed valleys, each containing an important road, branch off to the north and south (2) from the larger Hsining

> 2. The southern road leads to the Gum bum monastery and the city of Kue de ting; the northern one to Dai tung and farther toward Kanchow fu and the old Yümen, the gate toward Turkistan.

Ho Valley running from west to east. The mountains which enclose 133 these valleys are covered with loess and consist of the horizontal, red sandstone and clay strata which we find today under loess in such extensive areas of Northwest China, and which I have so often had occasion to mention. These reddish mountains rise up as much as 300 and 400 meters above the valley floor and are hopelessly bare. The summer rains are scarcely able to alter their faded color. Not even a tree anywhere. Even the willows and poplars around the villages are scarce. One very seldom sees large old trees anywhere in Kansu; they were cut down and burned during the many rebellions when the fetters of reason and right of ownership were loosened.

There is a great deal of rain in the region and many natural 631 springs. It is a little granery. Grain is sent from here to Lanchow 661 fu and many other places. The district also has a large untouched store of minerals. It is counted among the good sinecures. The best picture of its wealth is probably given by the annual income of the lowest civil mandarin, the Hsien, which amounts to between 20,000 and 30,000 taels (one tael is more than three marks, for the Hsining taels are very large). His regular income is, of course, as always in China, only 60 taels, the "rest" are perquisites. /173/ Taxes and - so it seems - lands which were formerly not surveyed but have now been reclaimed by the Chinese, and above all sentences in the many litigations make up the large sums.

N.W. China AFB

600 the arable land and already within the wild Tibeten steppes. Thus, I needed suitable guides, if possible ones who spoke Tibetan. Since I did not intend at first to go far into the Tibetan highland, my previous servants came along also. Fortunately I had quickly found the necessary men whom I still needed.

Already on the day after my arrival in Hsining fu, so-called "long Tschang," smiling modestly and smirking ambiguously, paying me many compliments, had come into my room through a small crack in the door. This man was called Da Tschang or "long Tschang" on our Hwang Ho expedition. He was an intelligent Chinese, 28 years old at the time, and got his name from his 1.80-meter height. He was the son of a petty officer on the Tibetan frontier, who had spent all his money in gambling and making merry. Tschang could read and write fairly well and he was courageous, as I knew for certain from my own experience. He was extremely astute and crafty and had an astonishing gift of speech. He was eminently capable of leading his fellow men by the nose and, if he wanted to, he could always say what people wanted to hear. He was a true child of his race and of his wild, rugged native land. He was a lazy loafer, but also an interesting personality. Although I /175/ knew his faults from other days, I took him into my services; for there was nothing better to be found.

During the first part of January I again journeyed up the Hsining Valley. My old passport had been approved in the yamen. The amban Tsching schu even promised me an escort for my journey to the Koko Nor. The gifts which I sent him were acknowledged by a rather large dinner that was sent to me at my house. For I had been recommended by the fan tai at Lanchow fu. The holder of the office of amban had been in the city only a few weeks. His predecessor, Tschun leang, with whom Filchner and I had conferred, had been obliged to give up the office in great haste the following winter and in the meantime the dao tai of Hsining had filled the empty post. The preceding amban had too blindly thought only of money and had, at the beginning of the afore-mentioned Kue de war, let himself be bribed in a way that was so detrimental to the Chinese prestige among Tibetans and Mohammedans that he had given offense higher up.

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131 When I received the announcement through the hsien of Hsining of the amban's permission to visit the Koko Nor, I had immediately set out in order to complete my outfitting in Dankar ting, the last Chinese city on the border. The way thither has been traveled and

N.W. China AFU

described by many a European. It is the entrance and exit of North 131
Tibet. Huc, Prschewalski, Rockhill, Littledale, Grenard, Hedin, 361
Kozlow, Holderer-Futterer all came through there.

You leave the city of Hsining through the beautiful west gate. 361
Two kilometers beyond, outside of two fortified encampments, there are a few tower-like earth mounds. The natives tell of them, that they were erected once by a crafty general when a Tibetan army was on the point of laying siege to Hsining, and were covered with countless grain bags filled with sand. The Tibetans, it is said, did not suspect the subterfuge, thought the huge piles were grain sacks, believed the city was much too well-provisioned and retreated. Somewhat farther out from the city, close beside the road, there is a four-sided earth pyramid about 25 meters high, which probably marks an old royal grave; but today no one remembers what this structure of earth once was. (1) 176/ The upper Hsining Valley

1. In ancient times the city of Hsining fu was much larger. There are today remains of ancient walls of stamped loess recognizable in the south and east parts of the city. Under these walls appear old, barrel-shaped arches with gray tiles, which were most probably Chinese graves. This old city must have been more than twice the size of present-day Hsining fu; it is said to have existed in the Tang (?) period when the city was called Schan tschou.

Originally the Hsining country, as well as the country around Lanchow fu, belonged to the "Hsi Kiang" (the western Tschiang) who were split up into many tribes. The great Emperor Wu ti (140-86) had the valley of the Hsining River conquered in order to keep in check the barbaric tribes and to protect his newly-opened road to Turfan and Baktrien. Around the year 61 B.C. under Emperor Suan ti, the first colonies of soldiers were established through General Tschao, canals were dug and a permanent settlement by the name of Po (be) Tschiang hsien was built. The city remained united with the kingdom until in 397-399 some general established his own dynasty (Nan leang). Even after this time it was always Chinese until it was conquered by the Tibetans in 762 and fell out of their hands into those of the Hsi Haia kingdom. In the 12th century the city and district /176/ of Hsining belonged alternately to the Hsi Hsia, the Chinese or Tibetans, and more peaceful times came only through Genghis Khan

[text continues on p. 241]

361 and the Mongols because through them the land was united with the kingdom and has remained thus ever since.

continues to be broad and rises evenly. It continues to be monotonous. After a little more than 20 kilometers, one comes to the town of Tschen hai pu, opposite which on the north side of the river lies the town of To ba (pronounced: Do ba) which is also surrounded by high and strong walls. According to the old chronicles, To ba was on several occasions superior commercially to the city of Hsining. In 1895 it was the chief headquarters of the Mohammedan insurrection. And when at that time the Chinese again gained the upper hand, this was the place that continued to be defended for a long time with great tenacity and with the courage of despair. Now To ba lies in ruins. Only a few farmers and small merchants cling to their native soil. The old mosque which Rockhill once visited and which was supposed to have been erected by Emperor Kang hi, has been leveled to the ground.

133 Above these two towns one leaves the rolling hilly country of the Hsining basin. From the treeless, loess-covered clay and sandstone mountains one suddenly comes into a high, stern and wild rocky mountain range consisting of granite and of slate which shows marked folds.

485 I did not reach Dankar (1) until twelve midnight and had the greatest difficulty finding lodgings even outside the gates in the open suburb. (2) All the inns were crowded with fish dealers who come up from Lanchow fu in winter time. There was nowhere a

[103] 1. On maps one often sees the name "Tan kar." The name is pronounced Dankar. This is the Sinicized form of the Mongolian word Dunkur. This latter name applies to the whole district and there is also a small Buddhistic monastery by that name, a day's journey south of the city (see p. 280 ff.).

2. The once flourishing suburb occupied by Mohammedans was treacherously attacked and devastated by the Chinese inhabitants of the city during the great rebellion. Many thousands of Mohammedans were killed.

000 The ting told me of his adventures in the grasslands. He kept repeating how glad he had been to get out again alive. It was a dreadful land, this prairie land. He had been obliged to ride through the cold steppes for months on end. It was like winter in the middle of summer. And these bad roads, these storms in the passes! He told of wolves, bears, even tigers, and said that the dogs of the nomads were as large as calves and much wilder and more snappish than raving lions. And then the rivers! He said he had to ride through them on horseback or swim across. When he came to Denang, thousands of heavily armed Ngolok had surrounded him and threatened him. Amid threats they had called out to him: "We Ngolok are as numerous as the stars in the sky; what do you think you can accomplish with 45 men?" He said they had acted like disturbed hornets! The supreme authority of the Chinese emperor was in no wise acknowledged. They even wanted to stamp their riding boots on the imperial seal, which is a sign of the deepest disdain. He had been unable to accomplish a thing and for this reason the expedition even cost him a great deal of money. He lost his own riding horse and many yak who succumbed as a result of great exertions. The Chinese government finally paid part of the damage in order to satisfy the Lhasa Tibetans and above all the monasteries. "You who were born earlier, wait until the amban gives you soldiers to take along. You had better go to the lake in summer," thus spoke the friendly ting mandarin.

I replied, "Your illustrious colleague, the sub-prefect of Hsining, told me that it is impossible to launch a boat on the lake, it won't stay afloat, that a /179/ a ship sinks immediately, and that the waters of the Koko Nor do not have the power to keep a ship afloat."

[823] "Of course, if you must go out on the water and visit the island then you can only go now. I, too, know that the waters of the western sea do not have any supporting power." (1)

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1. A superstition to which the Chinese cling tenaciously. There is not a ship to be seen on the entire lake.

"I shall see that you get soldiers during the time of the New Year," concluded the Chinese district chief, picked up the cup of tea which was set before him, noisily sipped a few draughts and took his leave.

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563 Dankar ting is a city of about 8,000-10,000 inhabitants and an outlying stronghold of Chinese culture which, like the city of

N.W. China AF13

Hsining and To ba, stems from the military colonizations of the 361 ●
Han period. (2) The city is 2,680 meters above sea level. In the 563
vicinity barley, oats, and vetch are raised, but no longer much
wheat. There are still real Chinese farmers as far up as this, although not very many. With their industry and their stable culture
they have spread out wherever the earth promises a yield, especially in the axes of the larger valleys. But in Hsining fu today, i.e., 563
in the district under the Hsining inspector, to which Dankar belongs, 167
all the smaller lateral valleys are inhabited by remnants of non-Chinese peoples. The Mohammedans who have been more than
decimated since 1895 are to be found in great numbers only in certain places. One has the impression as though they were once
artificially pushed in between the Chinese and Tibetans and as
though the Chinese were only now following after. All the Chinese
in Hsining fu still maintain that they come from the lowlands, most
of them saying that they came from the Nanking region. (3) It is
considered too barbaric to say that one comes from the land itself,
just as in the province of Szechwan where the Chinese still assure
you that they come from such and such a province but never from
Szechwan itself, even though it has 45, in fact some people say 68
million Chinese today. (4)

2. A few lis below the present city of Dankar, at the upper mouth of the valley, there are huge loam walls that might go back to the Tang period.

3. Kiangsu province; either as military colonists or as exiles.

4. The official count (better, estimate) of the year 1902 reports 68,724,890 inhabitants for Szechwan. Hosie, probably the greatest specialist on that region, estimates the population at 45 million. According to the census of 1911, it probably has 55 million. According to earlier official estimates, Kansu was said to have 10 million inhabitants. According to the census of 1910/11 Kansu has between 3,800,000 and 4,500,000 inhabitants, or 711,000 independent and 195,639 dependent families or households. Thus, according to my calculation, it has 12 inhabitants per square kilometer. 161

● 361 563 443 Dankar is a most interesting place, compared to the eternal monotony of other Chinese cities and city dwellers. And no wonder. It is the most important gate into Northeast Tibet! There is no other city until one gets to Tatsienlu in the south that has such convenient connecting roads into the interior of Tibet as well as into the rich trade sources of the lowlands toward the coast. Not only the nomads living around the Koko Nor, but also the Tsaidam Mongols, even those from Tätschinär, Lhasa merchants and inhabitants of the Tibetan province of K'am all come to Dankar. They all get edibles, primarily. For many tribes the market place of Dankar, or Dunkur gäsching, as they say, is almost the only /180/ place where they can trade in their wool, skins and salt for their annual supply of flour, tea, and luxury items. The Tibetans of the northeast have become economically completely dependent on the Chinese.

485 437 631 The practical-mindedness of Chinese officials, which is always bent on the cheapest possible management, has drawn its own advantages from this and prepared its administrative regulations accordingly. From olden times there has existed in Dankar the arrangement of the hsië dia (hsië kia) (1), that is, officially-recognized lodgings for nomads. In former times each tribe even had its own particular hsië da where only the members of one tribe might live as long as they were in the city. Today this system has changed insofar as the nomads may freely choose their hsië dia, but everyone still adheres strictly to the rule that Tibetans and Mongols do not use the ordinary inns, but that these are open only to Chinese. There are about thirty hsië dia in Dankar. Their innkeepers, Chinese or Mohammedans, must buy the right to house Tibetans or Mongols from the Chinese municipal board. They are wealthy people who, besides a spacious house also have large stables and cattle yards with room enough to take in a Tibetan with 300 yaks who arrives one day and a Mongol who arrives the next with almost as many camels.

The hsië dia arrangement is ancient. We learn about it also from Huc and Gabet, the two French Lazarists who came to Dankar in 1845 dressed as Mongolian lamas. Huc tells definitely that as a Mongol he could find shelter only in such a house. In the

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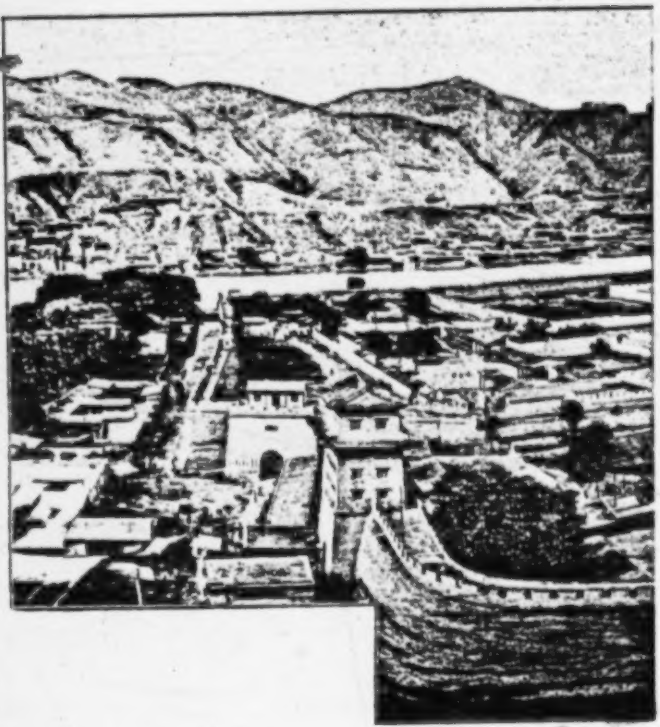
1. hsie means "to rest"; kia means "house" or "family" (pronounced dia in the Hsining dialect).

5: Tafel--319 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet

N.W.China AF13

Plate XLIII

/192C (1)/ 361



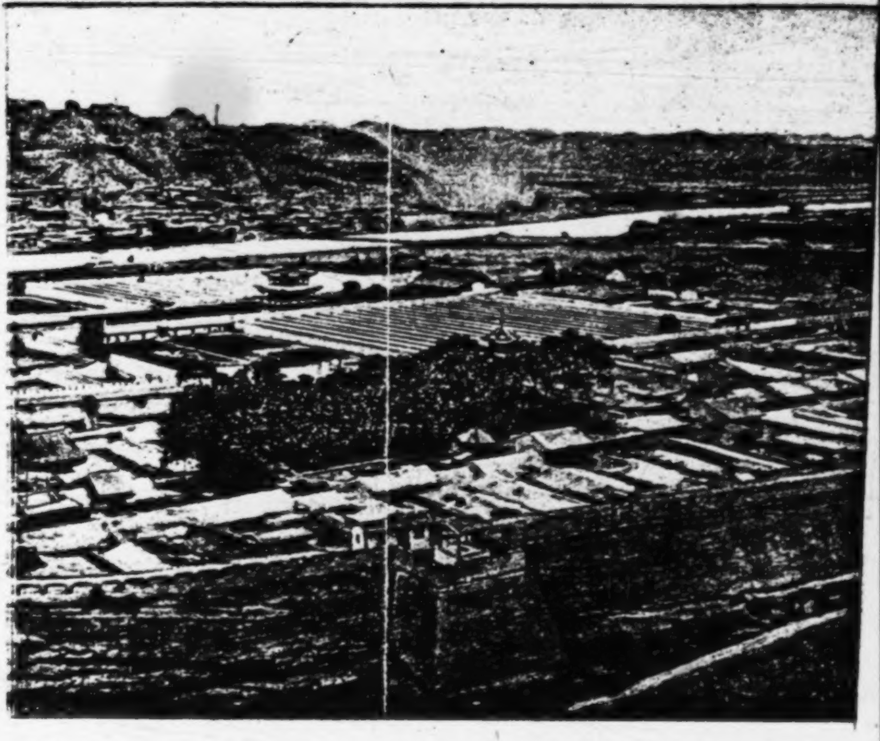
The capital of the province, Lanchow fu, seen from the west.

5: Tafel--320   T-3   (1905-1908) 1914   AJ1 Tibet

N.W. China AF13

Plate XLIII   /192C (2)/

● 361



The capital of the province, Lanchow fu, seen from the west.

5: Tafel--321 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet

N.W. China AFD

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Plate XLIII

The capital of the province, Lanchow fu, seen from the west.

/192C (3)/

5: Tafel--322 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 Afl Tibet

N.W. China AF13

Plate **XLIII.**

192C (4)

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The capital of the province, Lanchow fu, seen from the west.

000 sewed together the two lappets of my skin, right there on the shores of the lake, to my complete satisfaction. Fortunately, it was not a serious injury, only the skin of my head was slashed, the bone and periosteum had only been lightly bruised.

The rest of the day we traveled in a southeasterly direction, up 631 361 the valley of the Ara Gol, which rises almost imperceptibly. This valley presumably represents the former drainage basin of the Koko Nor during a previous period of greater moisture when the lake was connected with the present-day Hwang Ho. Toward evening, shortly before twilight, we reached the walls of Tsaghan tscheng (1), i. e., the "white city," in which Mongolian khans formerly resided, and where later for a long time the Chinese amban of Northeast Tibet had his official seat and his troops. It is supposed to be only 90 or 100 years ago that the yamen there was discontinued and transferred to Hsining. About 35 years ago the last Chinese military camp of Northeast Tibet, which was stationed here, was withdrawn. Since then Tsaghan tsch'eng is deteriorating more and more. Only once a 796 year on the fifteenth day of the eighth Chinese month, when the Hsinin fu amban is commissioned by the government to attend to the worship of the sea deities of the Koko Nor, new life returns to this town of the steppes. All Mongolian and Tibetan vassals of the region must appear for this festival. The nomad princes then come and live in hundreds of tents. In the middle of the ruins of the city a large felt yurt is set up for the amban. On the afternoon before the holiday the princes present themselves before the amban. Early the next morning the ceremony of worship takes place on a small hill outside the city, from which point one can just make out the surface of the lake on the distant horizon. The amban and the assembled princes fall on their knees, incense sticks are lighted, a piece of yellow silk which says that the emperor offers this sacrifice, is burned and everyone bows to the earth nine times. /204/ Thereupon the amban admonishes all the princes to maintain peace among each other and to remain faithful subjects. Then everyone rapidly disperses. By evening of that day the city of Tsaghan tsch'eng lies as lonely and dead on the steppes as ever before.

1. Tsaghan is Mongolian meaning "white"; tsch'eng, Chinese, means "city." Such malformations occur largely on the Chinese-Tibetan border. The place is also called "ying pan ga tang" and was formerly called "tsaghan tologha."

5: Tafel--344 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet
N.W. China AF 13

The crumbled loam walls and the old roofless yamen and temple 361 ●
buildings lay bleak and desolate when we passed through. We were 631
still merely crawling along at a snail's pace. In the interior of the city, in a corner of an old ruin, we brewed our tea once more before we traveled on into the night. In spite of our weariness, none of us wanted to spend the night here. The cold which set in anew after sundown was too intense. We preferred to fumble along across the barren steppes. Even though we were now going along a well-traveled caravan road, we had difficulty in finding our way in the dark to Schara khoto. We did not reach it until morning. We had covered 140 kilometers on our flight. All of us had sore feet from the solidly frozen riding boots, and the three rescued ponies were
also near exhaustion because they were too heavily loaded. 701

Schara khoto (1) is today the farthest Chinese military outpost 712
from Kansu. The Chinese government had stationed here a schu be (first lieutenant), a lieutenant and a few sergeants with 30-40 men (belonging to the green banner). They were armed with swords and matchlocks and a few old German drums and French horns. Thus, the detachment does not play a very important role. The soldiers even have difficulty defending themselves against the attacks of marauding Tibetans. There is an old wall but it is so large that it would take at least a regiment to defend it. There is also a large
old parade ground. Between this and the city which is empty to- 241
day there live about thirty Chinese families who cultivate a few small acres in the vicinity, raising barley and wild oats. Nothing else grows here. It is an unspeakably miserable spot.

One of the Chinese immediately received us very hospitably in 574
his mud hut, and turned over his large warm kang to us. Without 276
wasting any words he immediately prepared a few opium pipes for us, for the Chinese say this is the best restorative if one is over-tired. I was the only one who did not smoke and I did not wake up until the next night, whereas my companions, all of whom had smoked, walked about vigorously early in the day.

Two days later I traveled back to Dankar. On this stretch I was 000
accompanied by fifteen armed men and half way to the city I was

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1. A Mongolian name meaning "yellow city." The Chinese [103]
call the town Scha la ku to and say that this means "city of the green meadow."

764 day after the death of his father, the son asked me for a small loan and for an advance on my rent.

006 Then, just after the coffin had been carried out of the yard gate amid a large display of fireworks, the twenty-five soldiers of the amban who had left twelve days before for the Koko Nor in order to pursue the Tibetan robbers, arrived and drove my stolen horses and yaks into my courtyard. Even the old bitch I had bought two days before the attack was returned to me. But of my equipment only a few broken saddles and a battered tea kettle and half an ice skate were returned, the rest of the things had found other homes. The soldiers refused to tell me who the robbers had been. All they said was that the culprits were "wild Tibetans from the south." They said that three days before the attack on me a band of about 30 or 40 robbers had attacked and robbed a Tibetan tribe of Koko Nor and stolen 150 horses, but that the tribe pursued and defeated them and the robbers lost their entire booty as well as three men. "You ran into this robber band, sir; they spied on you for two days before they attacked. But your /245/ defense made such an impression on them that they later released the stolen animals. We found your ponies about 10 kilometers from the place where you were attacked, and they were quietly grazing in a valley. We also found three dead men there, unclothed and frozen stiff."

On that same evening the amban sent me a message saying that it was evident the robbers were not men of his tribe, that this winter an unusual number of robbers had come to the lake from the south, and that therefore he could not pursue the matter further.

It is no small matter to keep eight yaks in a large Chinese city. And everyone who knows China will understand that I was not a little frightened when the animals were driven into my dwelling. Many of the citizens had never seen these clumsy black ruminants and so they besieged my inn all day long. It was out of the question for me to keep the animals in the city and when I wanted to sell them the butchers offered me one tael apiece (three marks) because they believed that I would have to get rid of the animals at any price. I therefore hired a man to drive the animals a good day's journey south of Hsining fu and pasture them there in the mountains. The ponies, however, I did not allow out of my sight and took them all with me on my next excursions.

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[543] I first went to a large fair that is given every year during the first ten days of the second Chinese month in the vicinity of Wei
yüan bu.

yüan bu. A single day's horseback ride took me there. (1) 361 ●

1. Prschewalski's Y jam bu. In Prschewalski, Reisen in Tibet, translated by Stein, the Tu ren which I am about to describe are spoken of as Daldy, Doldy and Tunschen, and Prschewalski believes they originated in Samarkand and are a mixture of the Aryan and Mongolian race.

This Wei yüan bu is a little market town, ninety lis distant from 361
the city of Hsining fu toward the north-northeast, and is geologically 133
in the same red tertiary clay basin as the prefecture city of Hsining and the monastery Gum bum. The edge of the basin is about 10 kilometers beyond on the north and east and it is only there that one again finds granite and slate looming up out of the loess-covered tertiary. Thus, from north to south the width of the red clay of the Hsining fu basin is 50-60 kilometers. In modern times these red strata were split up into so many valleys and ravines that even this tertiary region has now become a bizarre mountain country. The material is so soft that the valley bottoms of the larger streams have been washed out to form wide beds. At the spot where Wei yüan bu is situated a large plain several square kilometers in size has been formed by the union of two such broad-bottomed, fruitful valleys. This undoubtedly accounts for the location and the importance of the place.

For, Wei yüan bu is an important town. It can even be called 361
a small city. It has a civil official who is now under the hsien of [624]
Hsining, it is the seat of a captain and second lieutenant, it has a city wall, a full half-dozen pawn shops, and all kinds of craftsmen.
Above all there are important whiskey distillers among its inhabit- [274]
ants, who export their product as far as Lanchow and far into Tibet, and /246/ many mill owners whose mills, like those throughout East Tibet, are characterized by vertical axle trees and horizontally
placed paddle wheels. In the census of 1895 the town had 820 fami- [162]
lies. For me Wei yüan bu was important as the present-day chief
town and market-place of the Tu ren who are under the administra- [443]
tion of the hsien of Hsining.

Tu ren (tu jen) literally means "earth man." It is a Chinese 563
word and means "a resident." It refers to those people who were 167
already in the country before the last Chinese inundation. This last large immigration of Chinese began in the Mongol Dynasty [1260-1368] and still continues.

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346 The houses are not old; they were built after the great Mohammedan revolution in the 1860s during which time the monastery burned to the ground.

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701 On the evening of the second day of the journey beyond Wei yüan bu, I had already reached Da tung hsien. I had again come to a purely Chinese city, after having passed only Dungan and Tibetan villages on my way. Da tung hsien is one of the extreme outposts of Chinese colonization, the seat of a district head - the hsien was established only in 1762 - and has a very large garrison. Besides the Chinese soldiers and officials there is also a Tibetan prince stationed here with a band of militia, and not far from the walls Mongols pasture their herds.

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361 The city is usually called Mo bai tschen by the people, which refers to the old market that belonged to the nomads here. The town is small because only Chinese are permitted to live in it. Adjoining it on the west, however, is an attractive and busy suburb where many Mohammedans do business. In the year 1895 it fell upon evil days. The Mohammedans made every effort to capture the city by undermining the miserable walls and making assaults upon them. It is amazing that the city nevertheless held for four months.

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361 The following day brought me through uninhabited high mountain country and through snow a foot deep farther west, as far as the Mohammedan town of Bamba. I found there only a few miserable huts instead of the thousands of families that once lived here. But it was possible to recognize all the old streets because of the countless ruins, almost level with the ground, which testified only too eloquently of the unspeakable misery, of the destruction of a talented people which, heedlessly, in a state of blind religious fervor, entered into hopeless battle with the Chinese giants. Bamba and the extremely fertile valley 25 miles long of Schang wu tschuan as far as Do ba where it joins the Hsining Valley was one of the centers of the last Mohammedan insurrection. With the capture of Do ba the revolt was quelled. The entire valley now has only 800 families of Hui hui all told. Once (until 1895) Bamba was a great rival of Dankar, today it is dead. Its caravan road which follows the narrow valley northwest up into the Koko Nor steppes is deserted because all trade from here is forbidden by the government. The Mohammedans whose families /256/ were forced to settle here after the Chinese victory (1) must carry on their trade in Dankar and

1. In Bamba there are about 100 families of the old sect

[text continues on p.439]

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5: Tafel--436 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 All Tibet N.W. China AF 13

Plate

Tafel LVII.

Schara khoto. (Seen from the east.)

and sixty of the "new" who were forced to settle here. They 563
are still unable to get along among each other. 361

Hsining. But there they may only come as transients in order to carry on their business and must live in the suburbs while their families are obliged to remain in Bamba.

I stayed a day in the town and bought mules and horses for my 000
forthcoming new journey. A great many people positively implored me to take them along as servants. There were competent men among them who knew the steppes and could speak Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian and so I took several of them into my service. When the contract was signed by both parties and by witnesses the men asked for the customary advance.

"We want to fetch our warm clothing and our felt coats immediately for the journey into the cold steppes. Our things are in the pawn shop in the city of Mo bai tschen," they said.

"But do you have so many debts," I asked, "that you must pawn even your clothes?"

"Heaven forbid! But we have wives and children at home and so it is far better and safer to keep our clothes in the pawn shop."

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/257/

CHAPTER VIII

Departure for the Ts'ao ti

When it is winter in the Central Asiatic plateau it is not only 132
bitter and bitingly cold but a harsh wind sweeps over the land, turning everything rigid and lifeless, so that the people who live up there, the devout and ceaselessly praying lamaists, have learned to speak not only of a fiery, but also of a cold and ice-filled hell into which poor sinners are cast naked and bare in order to be tamed and purified in a hell in which glaciers will devour them, icicles spear them, icebergs crash down on them and crush their bones with burning cold blocks of ice. But besides the cold which it brings, the Central Asiatic winter is also uncomfortable because of its dryness and its dust. Snow, the mark of our European winter, is a rare phenomenon. Week after week and month after month a radiant, cloudless sky stretches over a dried-up, impoverished earth. All living creatures are envoloped in a white veil, a dust-impreganted

[text continues on p. 441]

5: Tafel--448 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet AJ1
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Meanwhile a letter arrived from the amban yamen in which the aged Excellency informed me that he had warmly recommended me to the ðr fu ting of Kue fu. I was advised to start my journey from the latter city. However, if one realizes that the city of Kue de and the large territory it governs, which extends ten travel-days southward, is not under the jurisdiction of the amban yamen and that therefore, according to the customary Chinese logic, the responsibility, in case I had an accident, would not fall on the amban but on the ðr fu of the Kue de, then the gracious recommendation was all too transparent. But of course other circumstances forced me to start my Hwang Ho journey from there. ooc

C 133 A long tramp through a narrow ravine which was filled with rubble and was barren and deserted, brought me from I ts'e sche with my mules and horses to the banks of the Hwang Ho. My first task was to find out whether the way via Kue de would be possible, and therefore the bullocks were left behind at the Lao ye Shan. The valley of the great river itself which we followed upward for another few hours was bare and stony as the ravine had been. The nearest mountains all consisted of loose red conglomerates which offer little resistance to the summer rains and which are therefore so chaotically and deeply furrowed and torn up in so many thousands of places that even a mountain goat cannot climb their slopes. T [778] Blood-red Orgeln and pillars of clay and sand rise up skyward everywhere and one seldom saw a shrub, much less a tree or a house, but only occasionally in the distance a Tibetan temple site, a grotesque, strange-looking tschorten, the grave of a holy man. The road was deserted. I met few horsemen, and all of them carried guns and spears and had warlike miens. The right side of the river is also like a desert. T [792] There is a monastery in this desert which is famous because its Buddha image grows constantly larger. The devout inhabitants round about call it Tschang fo se, the monastery of the growing Buddha. Toward evening there appeared on the right bank of the Hwang Ho a thick clump of trees. There were a few larger valleys from the south that opened up there and conjured up a green oasis on the river bank. But we were still separated from the spot by a wearisome embarking and landing and a crossing of the Hwang Ho over 200 meters wide, which in summer becomes as much as 600 meters. The heavy, unwieldy boat is always carried far downstream by the current. C 361 It had thus grown late again before I reached the protective walls of the city of Kue de.

This city is at the moment the farthest Chinese station in North

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361 Tibet, the last on the Hwang Ho inhabited by Chinese, in fact the last town on this river, and has been fortified especially well by the government. Tibetans live all around it; some of them are farmers, others, especially in the south and west, are nomads. The city of Kue de is only 2,310 meters high. It is the warmest city of all the border towns of the entire fu, i.e., the prefecture of Hsining to which it belongs. But directly west of the city, just above a few islands the Hwang Ho flows through a narrow ravine which it has cut into a terrace 250 meters higher, with steep embankments. On this terrace there is nowhere a small field or a house. Thus, Kue de is an oasis in the midst of wild, bare mountains. When we /264/ left the Hsining Valley there was not a touch of green to be seen on the numerous willows and poplars, but in Kue de peach blossoms peeped coquettishly out from among the green shoots of pear orchards and budding wheat fields. (1)

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1. This region at one time also belonged to the Hsi Kiang and later to the Tu ku hün, and beginning with the end of the seventh century, to the Tu fan (Tibetans). During the Yüan dynasty the city of Ho tschou formed the outermost Chinese government station on the border. There a department was set up for the Tu fan, and its sphere of influence reached as far as Kue de. Later the town of Kue de was, however, lost to the dynasty and was not regained until 1371 under Hung wu. In 1376 it came under the military district of Ho tschou wei and the Tibetans were given a horse- and tea-market as in Mo bai tschen. The city wall of Kue de was erected in 1380. At that time 48 soldier-families were settled here from Ho tschou who were assigned tax-free fields for themselves and their descendants, for which they were obliged to perform military service as militiamen. Thereupon Tibetans and other Chinese settled in the vicinity. In 1723 the city was hard pressed by the Mongols under Lobzang Dandsin whose headquarters were at Mo bai tschen, but it successfully resisted. In 1739 the town came under the rule of the Hsining Hsien. In 1762 Kue de became a separate hsien under Hsining fu, and later a ting.

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[651]

There are only a few Chinese farms belonging to the Kue de district, but, on the other hand, 54 tax-paying tribes of Tibetans (mostly farmers) and 19 partly-exempt Tibetan tribes (nomads). Nominally, more or less all Tibetans c 563 631 T 101

belong to it on the right Hwang Ho bank as far as 180 kilometers (aerial distance) or eight to ten travel-days south of the city of Ting. In the east it borders the sphere of influence of the hsün hoang ting and farther south that of the tao tschou. The greatest Tibetan prince is the ts'ien hu of Lutsang, Lubungko, who gets an annual salary if he is not guilty of any major crime. After the last war in which at the end he played the part of mediator, he was awarded the red button and was given about 900 bushels of grain annually. After the Lutsang chief, the Dantschie ts'ien hu with the two tribes of Wanschgoro and Tschoch'ru (altogether 1,000 families) is the most powerful ruler. Other nomad tribes are: west of Kue de the Ts'aner, Tschebts'a and Rengan; south and southeast between the city and Lutsang: the Wulang Ats'o, Dschesa, Nerta, Kamba, Bara, Baa-Mongra (800 families) and Gonts'a. Many nomad tribes pay an annual tax in lamb skins instead of the horse tax which was instituted in the Ming period. Each nomad family is supposed to pay a tschü lin (lamb) skin worth 0.5-0.6 tael. In this way 9,000-10,000 skins are received annually. But the ting taxes the farmers around Kue de after each harvest for the amount of the seed that was sown in the fields in spring. The ting, in turn, is required to give gifts to the 24 monasteries in his district.

c 361 631 [712]

An earth wall ten meters high, with a rectangular ground plan, with very few gates through which a horseman can just about squeeze himself on horseback (that is to say, if he stoops down), gives us here an exact picture of the old Roman frontier camps on the former Limes germanicus. The wall encloses the official buildings and the chief shrines of the Chinese patron saints, besides a few dozen miserable Chinese shacks in which the soldiers and the officials with their families live. On the town wall I saw large piles of stones the size of a fist, which had been gathered together to be used for defense. The actual life and bustle of the city, buying and selling, is carried on in front of the south gate. There are a number of streets there along which Tibetans, Mongols, Mohammedans, as well as Chinese merchants have their shops and dwellings. This section is extremely picturesque. Countless lamas in their attractive costumes idly fingering their beads, lounge about there during the day around the open bazaars, the upper part of their gowns slung

N.W. China AF 13

● 361 631 over their shoulders, like the togas of an ancient Roman. Defiant-looking Tibetan horsemen, their long guns with meter-long forked supports on their backs, ride through the streets on strong ponies, often bargaining haughtily from their saddles with the shop owners. This outer city or suburb is also surrounded by an earth wall with gates, for Kue de is not very safe. 674 432 A small theft or robbery is the order of the day, in spite of the fact that there are only about 400 families (2,000-3,000 inhabitants) living in the city. An incident that happened while I was there best illustrates the conditions. A Tibetan yeoman, son of a chief, of one of the Lutsang /265/ tribes in the southern part of the city, had sold a horse to a Chinese merchant. But hardly had the deal been closed when a rumor arose that the Tibetan had stolen the horse from a neighboring tribe. Now in order to pose, not as a common thief, but as a grandseigneur who would not let such a fatal accusation rest upon himself, and also to avoid conjuring up political difficulties for his entire tribe, our Tibetan was forced to return the stolen horse to its former owner, a Tibetan. For, just as was the case during the period of our robber barons, the Tibetans lay great stress on good manners and reputation. So the young man goes to the Chinese in order to buy back the horse. In his distress, he even offers slightly more than he got for it. But the Chinese is merciless. He will not under any circumstances cancel the bargain. Of course, the Tibetan cannot offer him so very much because he stole the horse in order to recoup his finances. What does a Tibetan do in such a dilemma? The next day as the Chinese is leading his horse out from its stable, the Tibetan knocks him down, swings himself onto the horse and disappears into the steppes, never to be seen again. His friends bring the animal to the owner from whom it was first stolen. Honor has been restored. A Chinaman does not count here.

631 On the morning after our arrival I went first to the ŏr fu, the ting, in the interior of the city. At the gate of his yamen I was received with a salute of guns, a great honor in China, for which I was indebted to the amban and which implied the wish that I should not go into the Ts'ao ti from here.

The yamen building was in a surprisingly dilapidated condition; the town is very unpopular among the officials. None of them stays more than a year and so no one has the offices and living quarters put into shape. When it rains only a few rooms are weather-proof. Even in the guest room large pieces of wall paper hang down from the ceiling. Through the holes one could see the out of the question. During the second watch we were visited by wolves and their constant howling made sleep impossible. My dogs were mad at this disturbance and answered with angry barking, and the surrounding rocky mountains intensified this concert of the steppes with endless echoes. On the third day[1] we again came across traces of human beings, finally discovered a distinct path and soon saw people. We found a few dozen tents of the Tscham ri Tibetans, and around noon we pitched our tents on the small grassy plain in front of the Schara khoto walls (Plate LVII). 200 361 [523

The extremely jovial Schu be Tsch'en, the captain of Schara khoto, with whom I was well acquainted from my previous visit, arrived accompanied by his non-commissioned officers and official interpreters and was friendliness personified, although he must have cursed me inwardly for once again disturbing his peace and meditation. After the initial formal greeting, we embraced like old friends and exchanged presents. He asked me above all for European gunpowder because he could not get any at all or none that was good, from his superiors. His thick accent, his many "f" and "pf" sounds instead of the North Chinese "sch" and "tsch" respectively, betrayed the fact that he was a man of the people from "Lan dpfu" (Lanchow fu). He was an officer who had risen from the ranks. This schu be did me a great favor by sending a messenger the very first evening to the amban of Hsining fu to inquire after the promised /280/ escort. I had notified the amban of my change of plans and the reasons as soon as I got to Kue de and had reminded the old gentleman of his promise. But up to now I had received no answer.

At Captain Tsch'en's orders, a uniformed soldier with a loaded gun always had to help my men tend the animals during my five-day stay at Schara khoto. However, none of the soldiers inspired me with confidence. They were 15 and 16-year old boys, and yet the Chinese mature more slowly than Westerners. Besides, the entire garrison indulged in opium and were, without exception, obsessed with gambling. And indeed, what else should these people do with their time in this godforsaken place? Once a month there is drill, otherwise, except for carrying messages, there is no official duty for the men. Throughout the rest of China the soldiers can carry on a little trade or agriculture on the side. But in Schara khoto there is nothing to sell, the caravans pass heedlessly by and on the few fields only wild oats grows and even that ripens only every few years. It is easy to see how little profit there is in animal husbandry considering how much is stolen, for Tibetans passing by take all the animals that are not carefully 701 [276] [525]

[1][after leaving Ts'ien hu tsch'eng—Analyst]

N.W. China AF13
Kalmyk

the Piedmont gravel and the salt swamps north of this. 000

From the Dsun yurts where we first met people again, we took an 361
easterly course and after two more travel-days we came to Barun
kurä. In the belt of meadowland which we followed there stood yurts
in groups of three and four of first Dsun- and then Barun- Mongols.
Like the old Jew who sold ribbons in the market of my home town, I
extolled my wares in the tents. I exchanged butter, barley and sheep
for my hardware and my silver. The people were always friendly to 609
us. We slept and ate in their dwellings. At first they seemed sullen,
but they warmed up after closer contact and they laughed and sang
with Han and Tsch'eng. Most of the men spoke Tibetan as well as [191]
Mongolian. I became acquainted with their happy-go-lucky way of
living. Their liquor plays a great part in their lives, and they make 273
it from mare's milk. The men travel from one tent to another, drink
and sing, while the women have the duty of taking care of the work
and of the herd animals. But although the women are obliged to 562
shoulder the burden of the household, and increase the fortunes of the
family, they are by no means the slaves of the men. One old man
who wanted to sell me a few sheep on my visit from yurt to yurt was
given such a severe lecture by his wife who did not agree to the sale,
the lecture even being punctuated by a raised stick, that my companions
were forever cured of their initial great enthusiasm for Mongol
women. The Mongol woman, it is true, enjoys great freedom
compared to the Chinese woman. The women of the Dam Mongols
have an astonishing amount of authority for Asiatic women!

The Tsaidam Mongols (Chinese: Dam men gu) do not have high 428
moral standards. As in many other parts of Tibet, the son, when he
has reached his majority, gets the family property even though the
father is still living and the parents get a certain share set aside for
them. This is a very old custom. It was said to have arisen during the
times when people still set out on wars of conquest. The men capable
of bearing arms, who set out to war and who were able actively to
protect their families, were also /349/ the owners of the family
property. Now, however, the young Dam Mongols try to shirk their 888
responsibilities as much as possible. Today they are little more than
warriors and, besides, they give their old parents barely enough to
live on. I often saw two old people behind a protective wall that
was full of holes and squatting on a dung heap like beggars while their
son lived beside them in a fine yurt.

Marriages of the Dam Mongols seem to be entered upon as casually 596
as they are dissolved. After a couple has lived together for a while

N.W. China AF13
Kalmyk

586 they are considered man and wife, and the woman then gets a dowry from her family. If she is no longer satisfied with the union, she may choose a new spouse at any time. The children who immediately after birth are given some animals from the herd, remain with the wife. Often the women change husbands so frequently or 837 have so many lovers at once that one is tempted to speak of polyandry or pangamy.

The town of Barun kurä lies between swamps and in the middle 361 of a scrubby wood. It consists of a few miserable huts, and crumbled gates of which there is just enough left so that one can see they are Chinese in style, and chiefly of the dsassak's houses enclosed by an extensive courtyard. (1) The buildings of the town serve the Barun chiefly as storage places for everything which they cannot take along on their frequent journeys. Among the permanent residents, there are only a lot of old women as well as old men who no longer care to live with their families, besides Chinese merchants who are in debt, and orphans who have been forgotten by their parents.

643 342 574 We lived in a tent in the dsassak's court. After we had set up our tent and got settled, we were invited to have tea in the dsassak's reception room. This was a low room measuring three by four meters. The dsassak sat down on a thick cushion on the rear wall, while at his right sat an elderly lama from the Gum bum lamasery, a Mongol from East Mongolia, who was the priest of the house. The rest of us sat in a circle around the coal brazier which stood in the middle of the room. I was seated alongside the lama. To the left of the dsassak sat his brother who was also a lamaistic priest, beside him sat the wife of the dsassak, and farther down, near the door, my companions and the prince's retinue. The room was more than simple. The walls, like those of all the houses of the village, consisted of stamped loess-loam and dried bricks, and the furnishings consisted of a few cupboards of the most slovenly kind of Chinese workmanship and dirty, pulo-canvas-covered pillows that served as seats. The room was lighted by the door opening and a small latticed opening without a paper window, high up on the wall.

1. Rockhill, Diary, p. 165, discovered that the town was built as late as 1846 and was largely destroyed around 1886 at the command of the one-time major domo of the dsassak, Dowe, because the house owners refused to pay taxes to the dsassak.

Hädschir Mongols who had been buying their year's supply of barley 000 in Nomoch'an. They were all young people, five men and three girls, gay, happy-go-lucky people. They sang until midnight and all night long giggling and laughter floated over to us. They left late in the morning. The girls sat upright on their horses like the men. They had, themselves, saddled and packed their mounts as well as the pack animals. Aside from their packs of barley, their luggage was very scant. A common cooking pot and a pair of bellows, some butter and tea and the clothes they wore on their backs was all they carried for their two-month journey. And yet the temperature at night at this time, in the middle of October, usually dropped to -10° even on the Tsaidam plain, and there was an almost continuous cold west wind.

On the first day beyond Tengelik and on into the night we came 361 through a dense, high forest. Lama dyi and two Mongols were all armed with guns. Shortly before dusk we came upon the ruins of two square, high city walls, called nomoch'an ikhe and nomoch'an bagha khoto (the big and the little city) by the Mongolians. The larger one embraced an area of half a square kilometer, and the second was only a little smaller. Inside they were completely barren and empty. Lama dyi said that the cities dated back to the time of the last Chinese conquest, that is, about the beginning of the eighteenth century. (1)

1. From another account I learned that the cities were the residences of Gushi Khan, the Mongolian protector of the dalai lama. However, after the meng gu yu mu dyi, Peking decreed in 1729 that, since it would be difficult to find accommodations for troops on the Gas Nor in the western part of Tsaidam, there were to be 100 men stationed in the Gas Nor, 600 in Debter and 400 on the Tsaghan Usse. At that time the Gas Nor had political significance because the connecting road between Lob and Lhasa ran through it and the Kalmuk from Hami and that region who at that time were not part of China, used it. The guards at Gas Nor were supposed to guard this road and prevent repetitions of a Kalmuk conquest of Lhasa (For further details see Vol. II, p.146). In 1731 it was considered wise in Peking to have a circumvallation in Tsaidam for 1,000 men. The previously mentioned first amban of Hsining named Ta ai thereupon built the city of

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Nomonkhan (Nomoch'an) khoto, i.e., the city of the vice-regent. He not only laid out a yamen there, but also canals, fields and mills. The Mongols thereupon were seized with fear and trembling. They attempted a final revolt (see Vol. II, pp. 20 and 21). However, the military colony was kept up for only a few years. From this region the main road to Lhasa runs over the Dinse Obo into the Schoga Valley and to the Tschümtsing Pass. However, because of the plundering of the Ngolok, many caravans prefer to ascend the Tschang tang beyond Golmo.

K 241

/59/ Even today there is agriculture going on between bushes and trees in the vicinity of the two cities. The Mongols use an extensive irrigation system which, to all appearances, was formerly even more extensive and better. Today barley and Tibetan wheat are raised. The fields had just been harvested. Threshing had been done on the spot and the grains were stored in sacks. Nomoch'an is the most fertile spot in the whole of Tsaidam. There are broad stretches where there are no salt efflorescences.

K 787

In our tramp through the dense woods I had not been able to keep my little band together and in the evening there were two men missing. Lama dyi and his two Mongols took up their nine dice and decided whether the two were together, if they were still on the march, or if they were perchance devoured by the bear whose fresh footprints we had seen that afternoon in the dust of our path. Lama dyi was very much afraid of bears and kept blazing fires going during the night, all around us. Bears, he maintained, were crazy for human flesh and would attack humans wherever they found them. With the matchlocks and the light swords of the Mongols, it is probably not easy to attack a bear, and the Mongols take care not to get into open battle with the animals. They maintain that they lose many lives annually because of bears. However, the animals are supposed to come down to the plain only in the fall when the berries are ripe.

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The next morning Lama dyi was very proud. He had prophesied on the basis of the dice that the two who were lost were still alive and would come back to us. And a few hours after sun rise the two did actually return. One of them, Tschaschi, had wandered about all night. Tschang had found a Mongol yurt and had struck up a pleasant acquaintance and thus lost track of the time.

Lama dyi continued to be a good entertainer. With his many stories he shortened the monotonous journey across areas of sand and city. He afterwards confessed that he never expected to see me again. 000 My new undertaking seemed too risky to him. Above all, he felt that I had taken along too few people. I, too, was convinced that we were C too weak, but my financial condition was to blame for that. The first 487 night we stayed in Tschen hai pu and on the second day of our journey we reached Dankar. On the next stage I covered the 70 li up to Schara khoto. I had decided to take the road traveled by K'am traders as far as the Hwang Ho and the Ngolok country. I had traveled this road with Filchner in 1904, but at that time we did not know that this was a much-frequented way. It is the easiest route and the one on which it is possible to make the most headway.

On January 23 we camped in the middle of the Remo Yung (Mongolian: Ara Gol), a few kilometers from the ruins of Tsaghan tsch'eng; and on the following day we rode past the Bayan Nor and the South Koko Nor Mountains and at dusk reached the peasant colony of Tschabtscha. The weather in the highlands was clear and beautiful every day. There were only a few individual cumulus clouds that swept past us and over the dry, barren tala steppe that is visible south of Tschabtscha. At noon in protected spots the temperature went up to zero, and once it even went to +2°; at night it cooled off to -26° and once it even went to -31°. It was bitter cold, for the wind never seemed to die down and it cut to the bone.

Although Tschabtscha lies at an altitude of 2,990-3,040 meters, C T 361 a permanent village settlement has developed here and from year to year more and more Amdo-Chinese and Tibetans come here, among them many who have been guilty of some kind of mischief elsewhere. In answer to my question I was told that 250 families live in the scattered settlement. Most of them have come within the last ten T years. Originally the land belonged to a Mongolian gung (duke) who C today is in the Tsungkuk Valley near Gomba soma. Barley, oats, 241 buckwheat, flax, even potatoes and some wheat are grown here. Three favorable months make this possible in spite of the northern latitude and the great altitude. One of the chief factors is the sunny, southerly position of the valley pocket. The village nestles in the declivity of the South Koko Nor Mountains between /100/ a few low foothills, and is protected from storms. Another factor is the loess that is quite thick here and was piled up because the South Koko Nor Mountains formed protected nooks into which the dust that was blown here from afar could settle. Finally, not the least important factor is the Tschabtscha tschü, a lively brook, that comes down from the mountains and can be utilized for irrigation of the fields, so that close

6: Tafel--469 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 AJ1 Tibet AJ1
N.W. China AF13

Plate LXVII.

/facing p. 289, (sec. 1)/

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Tao tschou (old city) seen from the west.

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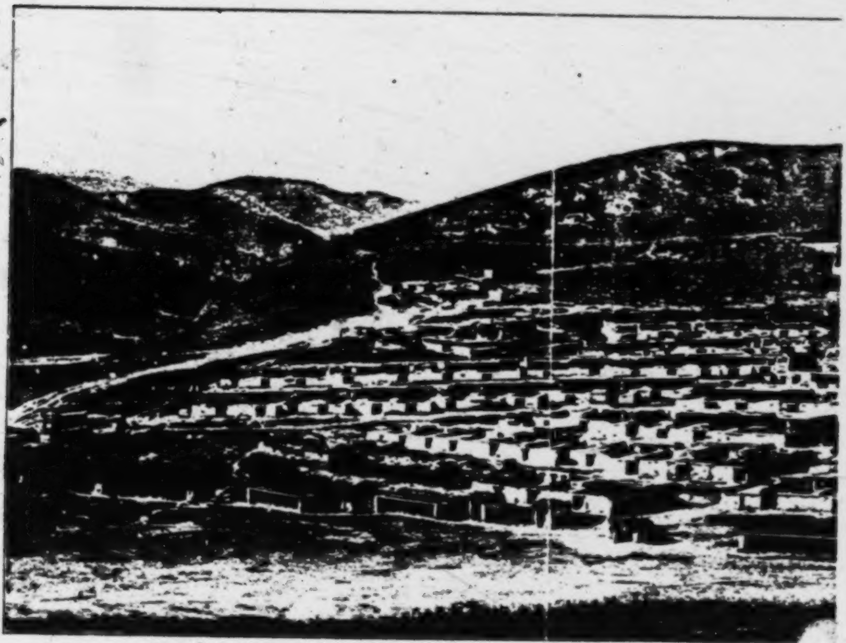

Monastery of Hei tso (shtsu gomba) in Amdo, district of Hsün hoa ting. In the background the Tai tse Shan Range.

6: Tafel--470 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 All Tibet AJ1
N.W. China AF13

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Plate LXVII /facing p. 289 (sec. 2)/

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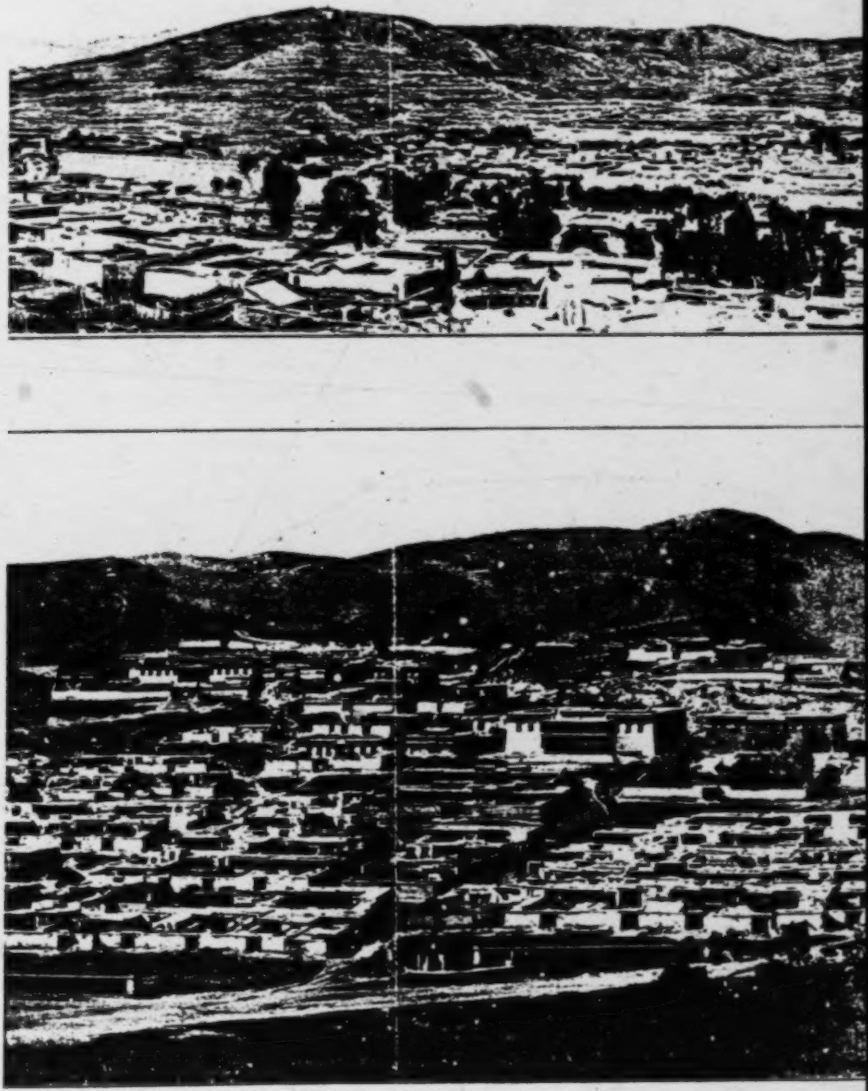

(Captions on sec. 1)

6: Tafel--471 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 All Tibet A31

Plate LXVII /facing p. 289 (sec. 3)/ N.W. China AF13

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(Captions on sec. 1)

6: Tafel--472 T-3 (1905-1908) 1914 All Tibet AJ1
Plate LXVII /facing p. 289 (sec. 4)/ N.W. China AF13

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(Captions on sec. 1)

133 the river, a great deal of loess mixed with broken stones can immediately be seen, and for the first time since I left Hsining fu I again saw a cart. /302/ (1) The higher up I climbed on the other •361 side, the purer became the loess masses. At Lao tschai ni, a Chinese town, 3,015 meters high, I had already reached a typical loess village and caves in the loess. Four kilometers farther and only 250 meters lower lies the commercial city of Tao tschou, the Tibetan Batse.

It was nine o'clock and had grown dark when, with great effort and exertion, I reached the city, and ör gen, the second night watch was long past before the tormented tsung ye who in the darkness had [797] lost the path, finally discovered me. Long before that, the friendly members of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Americans Mr. and Mrs. Ruhl and Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, had found me and invited me to supper in their new home in which the former couple 000 did Tibetan missionary work and the latter, Chinese. My stay in the border city lasted from September 9 to 23 and was made pleasant by the hospitality of the missionaries who did not rest until, on the third day, I moved out of my grimy hotel and into their home outside the city. Meanwhile I discharged the caravan, paid off the servants and escort and presented the tormented tsung ye and his men with a mule and three horses, besides money and food supplies. I had never before on any of my journeys had such apt companions who were so willing to serve me. When the tsung ye said farewell his whole face lighted up and I, too, felt his relief over the fact that, in spite of my vagaries, he was able to deliver me safely at the appointed place. I sold two more mules here and only Brdyal and six animals remained. A team /hang/ of mules brought the large pieces of baggage to my depository in Lanchow fu, and my time was occupied arranging my diaries and developing my photographic plates. Only a few more than 400 plates turned out successfully on the last journey, one and one-half boxes (420 plates) were destroyed by water, while 280, all of those taken with the polyscope camera, were spoiled because they

[493] 1. The boundary marking the distribution of the North Chinese two-wheel horse cart extends from here along the mountainous country I had just traversed eastward and keeps to the north of the Tsing ling pass in the North Chinese loess country. It is unknown in all of Szechwan and Kweichow, Hunan and in large parts of Hupeh.

had been exposed to light. The screws and screw holes of the small stereo-camera were not equal to the vigorous and ceaseless jogging of the journey on horseback. Unfortunately I lost all the pictures of the life of the people in Inner Tibet, many of which I had taken secretly and at the risk of my life. 000

361 The old city of Tao tschou, the tschiu tsch'eng (in Tibetan simply: Batser of Watsi, meaning "city," an originally Turkish-Mongolian term) lies at the bottom of a valley between flat ascending terraces of tertiary remnants and red clays covered with a moderately thick layer of loess. If one follows the brook in the valley, which is low in water, one reaches the Tao Ho after seven kilometers, at the village of Latsak and near Yang ba tsch'eng. The city has strong walls but they are no longer extensive enough and there are houses on all sides of the original quadrangle of the walls (Plate LXVII). The city is a military station and seat of a captain. The tschou of the district lives 60 lis away toward the east in Tao tschou-Hsin tsch'eng, the new city, which, however, is not nearly as important as the old city, although the district colonel is also /303/ garrisoned there. [563] The old city is inhabited by Mohammedans who own a beautiful old mosque in the center of the city (Plate LXIX). Like the Salar, many of them did not wear pigtails. Here, too, it is the Mohammedans who have charge of the trade with the Tibetans. Where in the Ts'ao ti had I not met these courageous people! They are also the ones who bring wheat up from the Min tschou district, because the region does not furnish enough, due to the all too brief summer, and who annually buy up close to 10,000 young Tibetan mares in the hinterland and drive them to Shensi and Shansi to breed mules. Besides that they carry on trade in furs, skins, musk, and grain. Altogether the total trade of the district amounts to probably 600,000 marks.

However, the old city does not have a prosperous look. The inhabitants number 8,000-9,000 and the natives are very poor. The yamen of the old city, in which the town captain is housed, was in a completely dilapidated condition. "It is an antique," its jolly occupant said, "it originates from the earliest Ming times and has never been repaired since, because none of us captains earns enough to be able to have the house repaired. When it rains my family and I have only one single dry tsch'ien (kien means compartment of a house) in the whole building. I was convinced that this tsch'ien was not in the schang fang where we ate together when I was invited there, for in the schang fang one could see the sky through the rafters between the broken tiles. But as a genuine banner-man and warrior,

N.W. China AF15

361 the captain was not irritated by this and saw the funny side of everything. Among the many yarns with which he spiced our feast I remember the story of a hsien who, in response to an official inquiry from Lanchow the previous summer, whether to his knowledge there was ore to be found in the district, did not hesitate for a moment to reply in the affirmative. Then, when a visit from a Belgian engineer hired by the government was announced, he quickly had a smelting oven erected and his ore-bearing rocks treated. At night when the engineer was asleep iron in hundred-pound lumps was added and a very good product achieved. The Belgian's poor opinion of the rocks was belied by the masses of iron which flowed from the furnaces of the hsien. Thus the mandarin soon obtained capital from the viceroy's strong box to open up a large foundary. By the time his term of office expires he can report to Lanchow that the iron mine caved in or suddenly gave out, and he can also count on the fact that meanwhile his superiors have changed office and the matter has been forgotten in the official documents.

175
361 The old city of Tao tschou is today still an exclave of China in the Tibetan Amdo country. Round about it Tibetan farmers cultivate the fields. But more than 2,000 years ago in what was then Tao tang Chinese were already much more deeply entrenched than they are today. They pushed on following the loess and the soft red, the quatä clay, and, defying the amazing altitude, laid out their terraced fields and built quite a number of settlements at 3,000 meters. There was here a strong frontier guard against the peoples of the west before the latter were split up and when their forces were still intact. /304/ Around Tao tschou, just as in front of the big wall in North Shansi, crumbled square towers of loess rise over the land; a widely ramified net of beacons joined all posts. Even the simplest Chinese of today realize that they are interlopers. Farmers tell how, long before, they came from down below, from the province of AnhWei. However, none of them can say when his family was transplanted thither; nor would he say even if he knew, because they were exiles. In the old chronicle of the city of Tao tschou the reasons for the earlier advance and later retreat are said to be given, but the book containing the records of the district was destroyed by flames along with the plates in one of the many Mohammedan rebellions around the middle of the 19th century. In the Sui and Tang periods (589-907) there was a large city farther up in the west. Two kilometers farther east there was a second city wall and seven kilometers farther, down below on the right bank of the Tao Ho, lay the fortress of Yang ba tsch'eng,

N.W. China AF13

175

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formerly known as Sche bu tsch'eng (city with the stone entrenchment). All three are today in ruins. In the last-named I found copper pennies dating from the Tang period, of Emperor Hsüan (Yüan) Tsung (713-756) with the inscription Kai Yüan (713-742). There I also saw an octagonal stone monolith inside remnants of a wall of stamped loess which today encloses only a small farm and potato fields. The inscription on the red sandstone says that during the rule of Tien bau (742-756) the Tibetans, the tu fan, conquered and destroyed the city, but that the Chinese, after a 30-day siege, again gained possession of it on the twenty-fifth day of the seventh month in the eighth year of the rule of Tien bau. General Li scheng was obliged to take the city within three days, otherwise he would have been beheaded. The district was at that time subject to the inspection of Ho tschou in Lung yu, one of the 15 provinces which the kingdom had at that time. (1)

1. Sche bu tsch'eng which is also mentioned in histories of China written by Europeans, as for instance in De Mailla and Wieger, must have been a Tibetan stronghold from the beginning. Its situation is economically too unfavorable that it could have been founded by Chinese. The right or southern bank of the Tao ho is at that point too cut up and is besides even today largely covered with forests. The river looks almost as though it had slid off the red clays that form the mountains at the city of Tao tschou and been pushed south into the Perm sandstone mountain range. There is room for only a few fields in its vicinity and no trade route comes by there. The river winds its way with difficulty between the rocks; it is 65 meters wide and, at an acute angle, washes against a narrow almost perpendicular rock and knife-sharp vertical slabs of slate, against which the fortress stands. Beside it a small level space was enclosed by a wall which ran from the rock to the river. Only this short stretch of wall consisting of loess-loam fortified with pile work, was vulnerable and might have proved fateful for the defender.

The conquest of Sche bu tsch'eng in 749, which was mentioned on the monolith, falls into the brief period during which the South Tibetans from Lhasa succeeded in uniting the chieftains who were always at odds. It was the time when Srong btsan sgam bo (617-698) had created a dangerous empire not only for the Tu ku hun (the ancient

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Hor) of the Koko Nor, for Nepal and /305/ the Indian border countries, but also for China and its Tan emperors, and when his tu fan as the Chinese called his subjects - under his eight successors (given the title of btsan bo), or rather under their mayors of the palace again and again invaded Kansu. With great effort the Chinese had recaptured the city of Sche bu tsch'eng as early as 729, but after only a short time (741) lost it again. Thereupon Emperor Hsüan Tsung had the city besieged again and again. Finally at the siege of 749 the Chinese stormed the short stretch of wall for three days and nights without pause and wore down the small garrison sufficiently so that it could be overrun. Of 60,000 soldiers who took up this siege, more than half were said to have remained. After this attack the fortifications were destroyed completely. But this occupation of the territory of Sche bu tsch'eng by the Chinese was also of brief duration. The tu fan took advantage of the difficulty in which the Tang dynasty found itself because of the rebel Nan lu schan, and already in 763 they entered the imperial city of Hsingan fu along with the rest of the Tu ku hun, after not only Tao tschou, Min tschou, Ho tschou, but also Lanchow and Tsinchow, in short the entire Lung yu or present-day Kansu fell into their hands.

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If the superiors of the high command in the Täwo war[1] had spoken the forceful language with which Li scheng[2] was addressed, this war would also have ended in the glory of Chinese weapons, but at that time the Manchu knew only half-way measures. So the gentleman colonel /Plate LXVIII faces p. 304 in the original text. / /305/ came out of the Tibetan country on September 20 with waving banners and sat happy and proudly smiling on his steed whose long tail - according to the Asiatic idea, a horse's chief ornament - had been completely cut off. Little Radang had yielded nothing until it was paid its 450 taels, and even then it dared, or rather had the temerity to deliver the stolen horses with their manes cut off in derision and with bloody tail stumps. The merchants' guild of Tao tschou fumed with rage at the cowardly act of the officers. "It would have been better if the expedition had never taken place," they grumbled. For this reason the colonel did not stay long in the city. On the march his troops looked very good and offered a pleasing picture, although

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[1] [Cf. Cat. 116, p. 487 — Analyst] [2] [Cf. Cat. 116, p. 491-492-4]

C T 439

> the river of Sang Chu begins, and it is transported on rafts made of tubes. Since 1900 trade in North Tibetan wool has taken on very significant aspects and the prices for raw wool have thus soared all at once in all of Kansu. The Yang hang, the agencies of foreign export firms, have thereby not become popular with the people, however; on the contrary, since all food supplies have risen concomittantly, the export firms are blamed for it, and rightly so.

C 487

takes us into the loess country of Kansu and a white, dry hood of dust lies over the landscape. There are no more rocks to be seen. Only thick loess and beneath it red loam are the materials out of which the hills on either side of the valley are formed. There is one village after another. Soon the road is seething with people. They are hurrying to the market of Hanchow, in carts or mounted on donkeys, or mules, and covered with dust. For a little while the Tai tse Shan which my Sang River must break through on the way from Labrang sends me a farewell greeting from Tibet. A defiant warrior, a true Tibetan watchman, stiff and rigid with steep battlements, it gazes down upon China and upon the pale and barren loess. Too soon, however, it is lost to view; the loess haze lies too dense and thick over the valley. It had been only four days since it had rained and already the eye could not penetrate the fine dust for a great distance.

Two years before on my way from Di dao tschou I had become acquainted with the clay basin of the Ho tschou region where it extends from east to west. This time /323/ I traveled through it in a straight line to the chief city of the province, Lanchow fu. I had now reached the Chinese highways and the region of the hostleries in which I could get nourishing food for the animals; therefore I traveled from morning till night and in spite of my slow pack animals, the many mountains and poor roads, covered 100-140 li a day (50-70 kilometers).

C 133 361

Very near the city of Ho tschou - exactly east of it - a mule track climbs up to a narrow, winding loess ridge which holds up the traveler for a day and a half and takes him through a labyrinth of deep ravines up to the banks of the Tao Ho (Plate LXII). At a depth of 20-30 meters loess covers the 300-400-meter mighty red clays and sands which in the main are deposited horizontally and in narrow ravines have been washed away by the flowing water, down to a substrata of granite. In the places where there is loess, civilization is possible. However, in the vicinity of the Tao Ho River it became

N.W. China AF/3

scarcer and there the population became more scant. Whereas I saw a small granery just outside of Ho tschou and counted hundreds of villages, the country around the Tao River became a sterile desert. The blood-red sand mountains in the shape of perpendicular pillars rose up out of dray valley fissures and there was nothing green to be seen anywhere (Plate LXXIII). In the narrow irrigated strip beside the Tao River the Mohammedan town of Tang wan tschwuan with its pretty mosques is an oasis in this wilderness. Giant water wheels lift the necessary water out of the river. Here we are already in the district of Lanchow. On the opposite bank the aridity is still worse. There the last fateful religious wars destroyed whatever was left that nature might still have tolerated. This wilderness lasts for a distance of six hours, as far as the 2,725-meter pass and an obo of the Hou dien Shan (rear sheltering mountain), until one has reached the crest of the Kwan Shan- and Hsin lu Shan range with its altitudes of 2,800-3,100 meters. After that loess appears again in great abundance and with it populated regions. /Fig. 15 appears on p. 323./ 133 361a

/324/ The tops of these sandstone chains are adorned with green forests of shrubs. In the ravines the Chinese dig for coal. From the heights the eye looks down on the vast loess country of Kansu. It is a yellow, chaotic tangle of peaks, this loess with its millions of grooves, which stretches endlessly to the north and only in one place a narrow, crooked band of silver like a Turkish scimitar lies glittering before me, - a sunbeam discloses the presence of the Hwang Ho. And now, as we ride on, a narrow green strip with trees, with poplars and jujubes, becomes visible, a tiny border along the shore, hardly worth speaking of. It runs along with the band of light until both come to an end at a projecting strip of mountain. On the projection two clumsy towers of loam of the same lifeless color as everything else around us are discovered and indicate to me the position of the chief city of Lanchow fu. On the same day on which I had left the Tao River I rode through the city gates and the narrow streets of the city. It was already getting dark and at the second gate inside we were the last ones which the guard permitted to enter on that day. But our haste was rewarded. Not an hour later I sat down to a meal that made me forget the tasteless tsamba and the eternal daily goa mien. At the postoffice where I went that same evening I not only received letters from home - the first for a year - but was also warmly greeted by Mr. Shields who had come some months before from down south in order to establish the postal system in the province of Kansu. Anyone who has the good fortune to know this gracious and 000

000 entertaining Scotsman knows that on this evening I could not have fallen into better hands, and that in the short hours before midnight my diaphragm had to withstand almost inhuman salvos of laughter. I hoped to meet other old acquaintances in Lanchow fu, but this time I was disappointed. My friend Van Dyk was with his bishop in the mission of Liang tschou fu for the annual retreat of the fathers. So, much to my regret, I could not even shake his hand in gratitude for his active participation in my efforts in safeguarding in his home the booty of my individual expeditions.

491 I stayed in the chief city until I had found a freight transport with which I could make a contract to have my baggage brought to Hsingan fu as soon as possible where I could pick it up again. Inasmuch as Mr. Shields helped me in this matter, I was able to leave the city in a few days. I rode on the large military highway between Lanchow fu and Hsingan fu, the road which also follows the telegraph line and which in the '70s the re-conqueror of Turkistan, the great Tso ts'ung tang, had had bordered with poplars for a distance of hundreds of kilometers. At one time, in order to protect this avenue, he put a death sentence on every wanton destruction of a tree. The trees still stand for stretches covering many days' journeys, but the track often cannot follow the old avenue for long stretches. Loess makes the ground too loose. Rains have often lengthened and deepened the valley fissures by hundreds of meters and thus the rows of trees border ravines which today no man can cross; meanwhile traffic often had to take an entirely different direction.

● 361 487 133 At the stopping place of Ngan (An) ting hsien the camel- and /325/ mule-drivers who take care of a large part of the freight traffic between Kansu and Shensi, take a somewhat more southerly route than do the carts. I continued to follow this mule track and decided to combine it with a stop-over at Ts'inchow, the richest city of Kansu. In the vicinity of Ngan ting hsien the country is still rather thinly populated. Only after 100 li did I get to Niu yin, a town of 100 families, and 20 li beyond came Ma yin which has 400-500 families and a larger market. Close by, the brook breaks through a granite range, the first solid rock that I saw since the Hwang Ho ditch near Lanchow fu, and behind Ma yin the loess became thinner and only a few decameters thick. The density of population increased visibly and the Mohammedan element which is very numerous along the road near Huining hsien and Lung te hsien, Ping liang fu, fell into the background. I had now come into a definitely mountainous 133 area; the Hu lao Ho River must here wind its way largely through narrow ravines of granite and gneiss. However, even here most of the mountains consisted of red loam of amazingly large proportions. 133

The farther south I came, the richer became the soil. A day's journey north of Tsinchow, kao liang, rice, and cotton appeared and these fields interchanged with endless stretches of persimmon trees the sweet fruit of which hung fiery red on the bare, leafless branches, and presented a picture which we so often see on the colored prints of Japanese painters and which seem so unreal to us. Unfortunately, I was obliged to carry out my long endurance rides in the south during almost steady rains. 241

I found the city of Tsinchow (1,130 meters above sea level) very different from the rest of the Kansu cities; I saw practically no house in ruins. Most of the buildings are made of brick and stand in the midst of gardens and thousands of fruit trees. The city has a little more than 50,000 inhabitants, among them 4,000 Mohammedans. Here, too, however, the merchants complained of the inconsiderateness of the administration which was constantly creating unfair taxes and new difficulties for trade, so that a great many hangs which arranged transports to Han tschung fu and Szechwan, had to close up in the last few years. But even so the city is slowly growing. The houses are squeezed into five separate walls and even outside the walls there are living quarters and this makes a picture that is entirely absent in northern Kansu. In ancient times the city was called Tscheng schi hsien and the first emperor of the Tang dynasty was said to come from here. Not far to the north on a mountain lie the loess ruins of almost completely disintegrated remains of walls from the Han period like the walls of ancient Teutonic times, in which Duke Wei hsiao gun was said to have lived for a time as an independent ruler (25-58 A.D.). Today the plow leads over the site. The bad Fan li hoa is also supposed to have been born not much farther from the city in the present-day Fan kia tsch'eng, and the inhabitants maintained in all seriousness that within the district, in the market town of Be yang Chu, the descendants of the family of Ming emperors live under the assumed name of Tschang, formerly Tsche. 361

The city owes a large part of its fresh appearance to the fact that it happened to escape the Mohammedan disorders as well as the incendiaries of the Tai /326/ ping era. At that time the battles reached as far as Tsing ngan hsien and the latter as well as Tsing schui hsien in the north and Hui hsien in the south, all three of which

.361 are under the tschi li tschou of Tsinchow, were sacked by the long-haired
ones and have since then not regained their former prosperity.
Corresponding to the well-kept appearance of the dwellings of Tsinchow
was a beautifully cultivated temple hill, Taischan, on which, among
ancient trees, stands the Taoist and Buddhist pantheon, and which is
also used as an entertainment park on festival days. In the Tschung
tsch'eng, the center of the city, I visited a very pretty mosque which
is over 400 years old. In the da (large) tsch'eng which is also enclosed
by a wall, are the yamen of the dao tai, the tschi li tschou
and a major; in the walled hsi (west) kwan are the large commercial
concerns; while in dung (east) kwan are the extensive buildings of
592 the apostolic vice-regency of South Kwan, in which I was warmly
welcomed by Bishop Ter Laak. These Belgian missionaries said that
133 the Tsinchow district has a great many earthquakes. Count von
Széchenyi knew about these, too, and in the history of China there
are several major catastrophes mentioned which struck the region
of Kung tschang fu and Tsinchow. Besides, in this region I noted
many and large landslides. Here mountain sides of loess a kilometer
square slide off on their clayey substratum along with all their fields
and villages.

554 One morning in the main street of Tsinchow I met a good old acquaintance, the scholar Li, who was with us in Tibet in 1904. As he spoke of his present position, a satisfied smile broke out over his entire, broad face. Originally tailor by trade, then shoemaker, painter, beginning with his 38th year student, then secretary and maker of calendars, in between small merchant, finally schoolteacher for children of 10, then our scholar, he was now, in keeping with the needs of modern times, professor of French at the newly-built college in Tsinchow, and a very respected man who moved only with the greatest dignity and very slowly crossed the street, "practicing quiescence." Meanwhile he had made a map of the entire Tschou bailiwick, having been commissioned to do so by his superiors, and whereas at that time when we left Lanchow fu with him for Tibet, he knew only 10 Latin words, he could now already "count in French." He had 50 pupils of the ages between 20 and 35. His teaching position earned him 20 taels a month with which he also supported his family which he had left in Lanchow fu. He was now a small lao ye, a gentleman official, and on the street he was greeted on all sides with veneration.

178 Of the new era which had begun for China one was little aware in Tsinchow, except for the school, its classes for foreign languages

N.W. China AF13

At last my carts had arrived from Lanchow fu and I could continue my trek to the coast. 361 Aside from its history and the Be ling, Hsingan fu is not a city which invites one to stay for any length of time. The large city of 300,000 to 400,000 inhabitants lies on a treeless plain and has no kind of canalization. The missionaries complained about the great heat in /330/ summer, while autumn and winter at first bring too much rain and wet snow and later northwest storms and dust which penetrates everything.

I decided that from now on I would stay near my carts. 000 But when they were packed in the courtyard of my inn and slowly rattling along in the direction of the east gate, I could not resist making a hasty little visit to the tien tschu tang, to the good Fransiscan monks. And they decided that the journey to the railroad and to the great centers of culture was still so long that I would have to refresh myself a bit, because I was reduced to skin and bones, as an Irish priest remarked. So it happened that it was 12 o'clock at noon before I rode away from the refectory. Meanwhile a snowstorm had set in, but unflinchingly I trotted on with my mule, determined not to rest until I had overtaken my carts. I hunted and hunted for them until far into the night. Without having found them I was obliged to look for shelter, stiff with cold. On the next day I looked again in vain; it seemed as though the ground had swallowed the carts. When I had again come within 491 the vicinity of Hsingan fu I saw, in the late afternoon, only 20 lis from the city, my Brdyal in a tearful mood, sitting in front of a little house, beside a large swamp around which I had ridden so far. In the middle of it two carts were stuck fast, without mules and without drivers. They held my possessions. It is true, they were standing in the middle of the big road but the muddy water that flooded the road reached almost to the hub of the wagons, and in order to reach them one was obliged to wade up to one's waist in the cold water. The carts had been stuck there from the time I took leave of the fathers. The drivers were said to have done everything they could in order to get out of the hole, and had finally borrowed a dozen mules and harnessed them to the carts, but in vain. There could be no thought of getting the carts away from there before dry weather set in. The drivers had long since reached that conclusion, too, and had taken themselves off; they probably intended to wait until the end of winter. Around the outside of the swamp there were 28 other carts stuck in the thick mud. In one place drivers were whipping a cart with a large team down off the road into a cotton field that had not yet been